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HENRY MASTERTON:

OR,

THE ADVENTURES

OF

A YOUNG CAVALIER.

BY THE

AUTHOR OF "RICHELIEU," "PHILIP AUGUSTUS," &c

Nay, droop not: being is not breath;
'Tis fate that friends must part:
But God will bless, in life, in death,
The noble soul, the gentle heart.
J. G. LOCKHART.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. II.

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HENRY MASTERTON.

CHAPTER I.

"Now, Master Harvey! now come out, if you please, and speak with the general," said the trader, opening the door of the room in which I had been placed. I did as he desired, and reassumed the seat which I had formerly occupied opposite to Ireton, who fixed on me his keen and penetrating glance, as if he fain would have read the truth in my heart, before he endeavoured to gain it from my lips.

"So, sir!" he said, when I was seated, "may I ask you sincerely, if you have not heard all that passed between myself and a person just gone?"

"The greater part of it," I replied calmly; for I felt very sure that denial would be in vain, and but perhaps involve me in deeper suspicions.

"Boldly answered!" rejoined Ireton; "and I hold you not the worse for answering boldly, Master Harvey. Yet a little further, if you please; what did you make of what you heard?"

"Simply," I replied, making use of what commercial terms I had at command, "simply that the house you wanted to deal with pretend to too high commission; that you offered what was reasonable, but they would not come to terms."

The parliamentarian looked at me a moment with a grim smile. "Right!—right!—right!" he repeated, thoughtfully; "they do pretend to too high a commission! Think you he understands the full meaning of

his words, Manuel?" he demanded, turning to the merchant who stood beside him.

"No, no!" replied the other; "he uses them but as common commercial terms. Explain to his worship, Master Harvey, what—"

"It skills not! it skills not!" interrupted Ireton, "to waste time upon it; he can make nothing of it. Tell me, young sir, as you crossed from France to England heard you aught of young Charles Stewart calling himself Prince of Wales?"

I felt my cheek burn with indignation, and saw the hand of little Ball-o'-fire, who stood beside me, playing with the hilt of his dagger, with rather an ominous degree of familiarity. I answered as briefly as possible, however, that I had come over in an open boat, and had been too full of other thoughts to attend to any political matters whatever.

"Good!" answered Ireton, "good! thou hast done wisely; for such spirits as thine are not fitted to mingle in the hard things of policy. Thou sayest thou art going back to France soon; wilt thou be the bearer of a letter thither for me, for which thou shalt be well rewarded?"

"Good sir," I replied, "I am no letter-carrier; and I would unwillingly mix myself with any thing out of my sphere. If it be a commission to any mercantile house, I will willingly charge myself with it at the ordinary rate of such things; but if it be a matter of politics, I tell you freely I will none of it."

"Thou art wise and cautious," answered Ireton; "but that with which I would charge thee is neither commercial nor political. It is but the letter of one friend to another, seeking to render him a service; thus far I may tell thee. Many years gone, I should have lost my life at sea, had not a man who was in the same ship with me, a man whom I had never seen before, saved my life at the imminent peril of his own. Now, though I value life as little as any man that ever yet was born, such a service as that which I received

was not to be forgotten, and through life my eye has never been off him who rendered it. Since those days, a thousand changes have come over the world, like the rolling variations of the year; and that which was then but a small seed cast casually into the ground, has now risen to a great tree, and is ready to bear fruit. In a word, I have it now in my power, not to repay the debt of life—that I can never repay—but to render in return a great for a greater service; and I would employ a person totally unconnected with any of the parties that tear this poor distracted land, to seek out the man I want, and give into his own hand when he is alone—for he is accompanied frequently by those whose interests are opposed to his, and whose persuasions may lead him into folly—to give into his hand a letter containing tidings which may serve him, and directions which may bring him to high fortune. Wilt thou undertake this charge, young man?"

The republican spoke slowly and earnestly; and there was in his whole manner a degree of noble and manly feeling, that convinced me of his sincerity.

"Without doubting you, sir," I replied, "though these are days of doubt, I will undertake that with which you charge me. I feel sure that you would not, after what you have said, give into my hands any paper which, if found upon me, might compromise me with any party."

"Rest sure of that," replied Ireton. "Deceivers I would willingly deceive. Against hypocrites one must use hypocrisy; but it were a foolish and sinful economy to cheat, when the business may be done by plain dealing. Now, tell me where thou lodgest, and the letter shall be sent to thee, with wherewithal to bear the expenses thou mayst incur."

"I lodge at present," I replied, "at the Pack-horse in West Cheap; but, I pray you, let not your communication be long delayed, for I must quit this place as soon as my affairs be finished."

"Before night thou shalt hear more," replied Ireton. "But let me warn thee, youth. Thou hast heard my

name and station; mention no word thereof to any man whatsoever; and so tutor thy boy here—who, to say sooth, looks more like some ruffling Cavalier's footpage than a sober trader's boy—so tutor his tongue that he come not to lose his ears, by blabbing that he has seen Master Ireton in London, when all the world thought him afar off."

I willingly promised silence myself, and warranted the discretion of my boy; and telling Master Hezekiah Manuel that I should come back the next day to speak about the silk stockings (which engagement, however I never intended to keep), I made my way out into the street, not a little pleased to have escaped so easily from the dangerous situation in which I had been placed.

My next consideration was, how most readily to change the goldsmith's bills which I had brought with me from Masterton House into money. The person on whom they were drawn in London was one of the oldest tradesmen of my family; but never having seen me, he could not detect me under my assumed name, even if I presented the bills myself. This I ultimately resolved to do, thinking that it was not at all unlikely that a person who had always taken an interest in the affairs of my family, and whose prosperity had been greatly brought about by my father's patronage, might have acquired some information of his patron's eldest son, whose arrest must, in all probability, have reached his ears. At the inn I accordingly made the bills payable to Master George Harvey; and, still guided by my boy, set out once more for Milk-street, where the goldsmith lived, close by the little church of St. Mary Magdalene. He was well known, and easily found; but on inquiring for him in his shop, one of the men who was carefully rolling up some silver dishes in leathern skins, informed me that Master Wilson had just stepped forth, but would be back shortly.

I paused for a moment in the shop; but as I saw that the man viewed me with a suspicious eye, and swept the counter of one or two small articles of jew-

elry that lay thereon, I told him with somewhat of a smile that I would return in half an hour; and, walking out, I entered the little church hard by, the door of which stood open. I passed away the time in reading the monumental inscriptions that graced the aisle, and moralizing upon the tombstones of many a worthy merchant and fat alderman—Thomas Skinners, and Gerard Gores, and Thomas Hawkinses innumerable; while, set down fair in order, came an account of all the copious posterity of sons and daughters which each had left in his generation. But my mind was little in the business; and while my eyes were busy upon the tombs of the defunct burghers, and an occasional comment on their state or fate crossed my thoughts, another train of ideas proceeded slowly in my brain, the subject of which was Walter Dixon, and his conversation with the republican general.

It were of little use to record all the steps by which I arrived at conclusions on the matter; it is sufficient that from all I had heard I gained a clearer insight into the late events of my life than I had hitherto possessed. I shall not attempt to puzzle any one who may read these pages, by recording the false suppositions which mingled themselves with the more correct ones that I formed; but those conclusions which proved afterward to be just were as follows:—Walter Dixon, evidently the villain I had supposed him from the first, had been guided all through his conduct to my brother and myself, from our first meeting him at Amesbury, by the purpose of preventing our junction with Lord Goring. The reward he proposed to himself, and which probably had been held out to him by some of the leaders of more influence than himself, was the estates of Lady Eleanor Fleming; and, beyond doubt, his scheme was cunningly devised both for making her the means of staying my brother on his march, and for bringing her, by our very stay at her dwelling, within the list of malignants, as they were called, whose property was confiscated every day for the use of some knave like himself. Gabriel Jones had evidently been merely his

agent and spy, bribed perhaps by the prospect of sharing the spoil; and by his directions, undoubtedly, Walter Dixon had followed us from Exeter to Amesbury. From all that had passed, I doubted not that the parliamentarian had been instigated to denounce my brother as projecting new schemes of revolt, by Lady Eleanor herself, for the purpose of breaking off his marriage with Emily. This idea was familiar with my mind before, and I thence derived an assurance of my brother's safety, as far as his life went—for I felt sure that her love for him was too great to suffer her to take such steps without having previously ascertained his security. Nevertheless, to find him was still a great object with me; for although, I confess, after all that had happened, I despaired of detaching him from the pursuit of his criminal passion for Lady Eleanor, I could not be satisfied till I had made myself sure of his personal safety. Of course, the more selfish desire of obtaining his renunciation of Emily's hand had its share in my motives; but fraternal affection, notwithstanding all he had done to shake it,—notwithstanding that esteem and respect were gone,—still made me dream of saving him from the ruin he had brought upon himself, even when the hope of doing so was almost extinguished.

Such was the subject of my ruminations, while I remained in the church of St. Mary Magdalene in Milk-street; and they sufficed to occupy fully more time than I had intended to consume in that place. At length, greatly to the relief of little Ball-o'-fire, who was tired by this time of old monuments and his own thoughts, I once more left the church, and entered the shop of the goldsmith, where I found the worthy merchant himself. He took the bills as a matter of course, and glanced his eye over them.

"Ay!" cried he, as he read the names:—"Master Harry Masterton—and where is he at present, pray, young gentleman?—where is the indorser?"

"He was in France when last I left him," I replied

"Pray, where is his brother? Can you inform me, as I have business to transact with him?"

"Not I—not I! I know nothing of him!" answered the goldsmith hastily, as he counted out the money: "not I—not I! How should I know any thing of him? I heard of his being taken as a malignant, and the old lord shot—but I know nothing at all!"

Ever and anon as the old man spoke, he raised his eyes to my face with a sort of furtive yet inquiring glance; and, when he had counted out the money, put it in a canvass bag, marked, numbered, and sealed it, he laid his hand thereon, saying,—

"You seem tired, young gentleman. If you will come in with me, you shall taste a cup of nappy ale as ever was brewed in the ward of Cripplegate. Will you come in?"

As I could not help suspecting, though I cannot well tell why, that the old goldsmith knew more of my brother than he chose to proclaim to all the world, I did not refuse his invitation; and mounting a dark and narrow stair, which led direct into one side of his shop, he conducted me to a small neat chamber above, round which stood many a rare curiosity from foreign lands, and many a massive piece of plate. He there bade me sit down; and running down again himself with the activity of a squirrel, he brought up, in two or three minutes, a foaming tankard, and a crystal drinking-cup, and then carefully closed the door.

There was a good deal of agitation in his manner, as he set the things he brought down on the table; and when he had done, he stood before me, rubbing his hands in visible perturbation. "I don't know, young gentleman—I don't know," he cried, "God forgive me—I'm not sure; but yet I cannot help thinking you are very like your lady mother—very like, indeed; a strong resemblance, as I term it—a strong resemblance. I remember very well when I took her marriage jewels—a pretty creature she was, oh dear!—And you are like your brother too; but not so like him as like your lady mother."

"And pray when did you see my brother, Master Wilson?" I demanded, finding the subject opened so unexpectedly. "And where is he, pray?"

"Oh 'tis but two nights since I saw him, sir," replied the old man, "when I took him all the money I could raise upon the jewels and plate. But I would not speak about it before the boys in the shop, for the world; for I might get myself into trouble, you know."

"I know nothing, my good Master Wilson," I replied; "but come to you for information. I have neither seen nor heard of my brother since his arrest."

"Oh gracious! then I have a long story to tell," answered the goldsmith. "But take a cup of ale, sir, take a cup of ale, while I run down and lock up the money-drawer. The lads are honest enough, doubtless; but I never love to put temptation in folk's way —safe bind safe find, is a good proverb. Take a cup of ale, sir, I will be back directly. I never leave it open, never; but I was so flustered to see you, sir, and to get you up here, that I forgot it till this blessed minute."

The old man came back in a few moments, less flustered, as he called it, than he went; and he began and continued a long story which I am sorry my memory does not serve sufficiently to repeat in his own words. The substance however was, that he had been sent for late, about four days before, to speak with a gentleman in Westminster; and though he took boat at the nearest stairs, it was dark before he landed at Whitehall. Following the direction that had been given, he came to a house, where being brought to a splendid lodging, he found a gentleman sitting in deep mourning, with the most beautiful lady that ever his eyes beheld. The gentleman proved to be my brother; and, forced to explain his circumstances to the worthy goldsmith, he told him that he had been arrested as an obdurate malignant, and brought to London; but that he owed his deliverance solely to the courage and exertions of the lady he saw. He then placed in the old man's hands a large quantity of jewels and plate, and

desired him to convert it with all speed into bills of exchange upon Paris. Various interviews took place; for, as Master Wilson said, money was scarcely to be had in the city; trade was nearly ruined with the civil dissensions of the times, and he could not procure for the articles intrusted to him any thing like their real value. He did not choose therefore to act on his own responsibility, and was more than once obliged to consult Frank on his conduct. The matter, however, was at length finally settled; and the amount of nearly twenty thousand pounds was obtained and transmitted to my brother in bills of exchange.

Whose were the jewels and plate the old man could not say; but he assured me that Frank was living apparently at ease, and under little apprehension of being again arrested, although he did not venture out of his dwelling while in London. He had set forth for Paris two days before my arrival; and, as the goldsmith had made particular inquiries without learning that he had been retaken, he concluded that his flight from England had been uninterrupted.

In answer to some questions I put to him, he informed me that my brother had appeared very grave and sad, except when he was speaking to the lady who was always with him. "He did not tell me who she was," added the goldsmith; "and though the worthy and respected lord your father was good enough to commission some jewels about a month since for a lady your brother was going to marry, oh, Master Henry Masterton! I do not think the lady I saw there was she. I fear me—I fear me, that my young lord is going wrong. She was as beautiful as a princess, that is certain; and as gentle and as noble as could be; but somehow—I don't know what—she seemed not like his wife either."

I was silent, though I well knew who the person was; and I had myself felt that indescribable something in the manners and appearance of Lady Eleanor Fleming that had given so unfavourable an impression to the mind of the worthy goldsmith. There was

something in her too sweet, too brilliant, too fascinating. The fire of the heart and the mind was suffered to shine out so brightly, that a doubt was instantly raised whether it would always be repressed by principle and virtue.

But it was not for me to blazon my brother's errors; and though the old man evidently sought to know who the lady was he had seen so constantly by the side of Frank, I was silent. Being assured of his personal safety, I now only endeavoured to discover the means of tracing him in France; but in regard to his course the goldsmith could give me no information of any kind, except the address of a Jewish house in Paris, on whom the bills of exchange were drawn.

Leaving in his hands the principal part of the money which I had just received, to be invested in bills on the same house, I took with me the sum of one hundred pounds; and after some further conversation of little moment, I left Master Wilson, with directions to transmit to me the bill, at my lodging in Cheap, by the name of Harvey.

On my arrival at the inn, I visited the stables to see that my horses were well taken care of; and there I found that some person, doubtless sent by Ireton, had been making minute inquiries concerning me, and endeavouring to ascertain exactly the road I had followed to London. As I knew, however, that every thing which they could discover would prove my former account of my journey to be correct, as far as related to my progress from the coast to the metropolis, these investigations gave me no inquietude, and I sat down to the host's table at the inn somewhat reconciled to London, and more at home amid its mighty swarms of human beings.

CHAPTER II.

I WAS now most anxious to quit a city where my stay could be productive of no further good; and, in hopes of the arrival both of the letter which Ireton had promised to send, and of the bills of exchange on Paris, I prepared to set out with the dawn of the following morning. The day went by, however, without the coming of either; and night fell, leaving me not a little impatient under the apprehension of being detained another day. Every hour which I passed at a distance from Emily Langleigh made me both unhappy and anxious. I had never before had any one depending solely upon me for protection and support. I had never yet had one whose whole hopes and wishes centred in my welfare, and all the dear cares of such a situation were new and sharp upon my mind. I fancied a thousand accidents that might happen to Emily during my absence. I pictured all the anxiety she would feel till my return; and I anticipated further delay with a degree of irritation that it is impossible to describe.

At length, towards eight o'clock, as I was packing up my little store of gold in the valise, which served to render my small page of about equal weight for a horse with myself, one of the drawers ushered into my chamber a man wrapped in a long night-cloak, which being laid aside, immediately discovered to me General Ireton. He sat down on the first vacant chair; and, drawing a small packet from his bosom, gave it into my hands.

"I have come myself, Master Harvey," he said, "in order to charge you to great care in regard to that packet. You will find General St. Maur either in Paris or at St. Germain's. Give it to him, with as-

surances of my unaltered regard; and tell him, should he speak to you on politics, that though he may suppose me altered in my opinions since last we met, such is not the case; and that while I steadily pursue the destruction of one man's tyranny in England, I will equally oppose the elevation of any other to the same unjust power. But though he and I differ, say to him that is no reason why he should not come over, and take advantage of an opportunity that may never return.

The name General St. Maur struck me as in some degree familiar to my ear, but at the moment I could not recall where I had heard it; and putting the packet carefully into the valise, I assured the republican that it should be faithfully delivered to the person for whom it was intended. I made my reply as brief as possible; for I had no great delight in the society of Master Ireton, though I could not but feel some respect for the stern and uncompromising principles which he displayed in a far higher degree than any other of the parliamentary leaders. I was anxious that he should go also, for I was every moment afraid that something might happen to betray me; and as generally occurs when one is desirous of another's absence, he seemed particularly inclined to stay; sitting smoothing his band, or playing with his sword-knot, and talking with the easy, familiar, and desultory style of a person conversing with an inferior.

He asked me a number of questions about France; some concerning its commerce, some relating to its natural productions, some referring to the present state of its internal policy. To all I replied as best I could; and doubtless had Ireton been well acquainted with the subject, he would soon have perceived that I was talking great nonsense. In the midst of this conversation, I heard a step coming up the stairs; and, as I foreboded, in marched Master Wilson, the goldsmith, with a lantern in his hand, and his eyes dazzled by the light of the room. "I have been a long time, Master Harry Masterton," he exclaimed, as he entered, "I have been a long time, but—" At that moment his eye fell upon

Ireton, seated a little to the right of the door; and I shall not easily forget the air of bewildered astonishment which filled the countenance of the poor goldsmith as he beheld that face, which he knew full well. He said not a word; his horror and surprise were far too overpowering for that; but with one hand still stretched out, in the act of unfolding his cloak, and the other dangling with the lantern, his mouth wide open and his eyes stretched to unnatural roundness, he stood gazing upon Ireton with terror and dismay visible in every line and feature.

Ireton sat with perfect calmness, though he had started at the first sound of my real name; and I stood with no small vexation, waiting for what unpleasant thing was to come next. The first movement among us was made by little Ball-o'-fire, who sprang to the door, locked it, and gave me the key.

"So, sir," said Ireton, after a moment's pause, "I have been deceived, and your name is not Harvey, but Masterton—"

"Oh dear! oh dear! what have I done!" exclaimed the poor goldsmith, wringing his hands. "I have ruined him, I have, indeed! This is a terrible nonplus, as I term it."

"You *have* been deceived, General Ireton," I replied to the parliamentarian, who sat eying me with great composure; "and my name, as you say, is *not* Harvey, but Masterton."

"Ay, and doubtless, sir," he continued, imitating, with somewhat of a sneering tone, the reply I had made to his questions in the morning; "and doubtless you are not of the Mastertons of Kent, but of Devonshire. Probably also, sir, you may be a traveller for a royal *house*, and the last commission intrusted to you was one from Stuart and company."

"You may spare your sneers, General Ireton," I replied. "I deceived you, as you would deceive an adversary; and no more. Accident has discovered to you who I am, and has put me in some degree in your power. It is for you to profit by that accident, as you think fit."

"And do you propose, sir," demanded Ireton,—"which I suppose you do, by the key you hold in your hand,—to impede my exit from this chamber?"

"Not in the least," I replied, proceeding to the door and throwing it wide open. "Not in the least! Pass freely, sir. I believe you to be a man of honour, though an enemy; and I doubt not that you will act as a man of honour should do."

Ireton rose, and walked towards the door; but it was only to close it again. After having done which, he resumed his seat, and waved his hand to silence the goldsmith, who was begging and praying with piteous tones that he would not betray me. "We must have a few more words before we part, young gentleman," he said, as soon as the other ceased. "Will you promise me to answer me truly, on your honour?"

"If I answer you at all," I replied.

"That will do," he rejoined; "all I desire is that I may not have to contend with double meanings, like this morning. Are you a son of the late Lord Masterton?"

"I am," I replied.

"Were you not upon the eve of marrying the Lady Emily Langleigh, when you were arrested by Major-general Dixon?" he then demanded.

"I was not. You mistake me for my brother," was my answer.

"True! true!" said Ireton, "he must be an older man. Then you are the young gallant that escaped to France. I see it all now. What brought you, then, to London, when you were safely across the water?"

"To see whether I might not render some aid to my brother," I answered, "after having placed the Lady Emily in safety."

"She was never in danger," he replied; "I would take good care of that. But you have heard, of course, that your brother has made his escape, without your assistance. Have you not?"

"I have heard it so rumoured," I replied, afraid of committing the poor goldsmith, "and therefore I only

waited till this good man brought me the bills of exchange upon Paris, in return for those I presented him this morning."

"And you are really and truly, without deceit, going back direct to France," demanded Ireton. "Is it so? or is it not? on your honour, Master Masterton."

"On my honour, then, without I am prevented by your means," I replied, "I am going back direct, without a day's delay."

"Far be it from me to stop you," replied Ireton. "If I had found you, or your brother either, as lately you appeared in Kent, troubling the peace of England, and striving to set up a tyranny that is past, I would have had you out and shot you, as I would do a mad dog, or any other dangerous beast; but I would as soon think of taking advantage of an accidental discovery to destroy a man who had relinquished his evil ways, though not perhaps his evil wishes, as I would think of raising my hand against my own life. Nay more, young gentleman," he added, "I will still trust you with the packet I gave you but now. The time may come when you will thank me for so doing. May I trust to you to deliver it carefully and well, as I told you, when no one is present but the person to whom it is addressed?"

"My business certainly is not that of a letter-carrier," I replied; "but, nevertheless, you act towards me with such liberality of feeling, that I will not refuse to be the bearer, trusting, as I trusted before, that the packet contains nothing contrary to my allegiance—or to the interest of that party to which I am attached."

"Nothing, I assure you," answered Ireton; "or, as you would say—nothing, upon my honour. I must not now offer," he continued, "to Master Harry Masterton the reward for carrying that letter which I was about to have bestowed on the humbler Master Harvey. I know you Cavaliers hold it one of your points of pride to receive money for nothing but shedding blood. The days are coming, I trust, when there will be better notions of honour than can be given by a long descent.

But I must go. Sleep soundly, young gentleman; and, as soon as may be, tread your way back to France, for you might meet with men among us who would scruple less to betray you than I do."

As he spoke he rose to depart; but poor Master Wilson caught him by the cloak, begging most movingly that he would not betray him either.

"Pshaw!" cried Ireton; "betray thee, man! thine own fears betray thee more than any one else can do. What could I know of thy being here, but that thou hadst come to transact some business about bills of exchange with this young man? Keep thine own counsel, and I have nothing to betray. But mark me, Master Wilson, the less thou hast to do with malignants the better: and more—forget, as soon as thou canst, that thou hast seen me here this night; for if thou dost but breathe that I have been within the walls of London for a month past, I will take care that on some occasion thy gold pots are made to answer it."

Thus speaking, the parliamentary general turned and left the chamber; and, after a few words of exclamation and surprise, Master Wilson proceeded to hand over to me the bills of exchange on Paris. He staid but for a moment after this business was concluded, and then bidding God be with me, hastened away as fast as ever he could, heartily tired and sick, I am convinced, of having any thing to do with malignants; and forswearing all transactions for the future with any but the party in power.

As soon as all were gone, I applied myself to the further packing of my valise, with the assistance of little Ball-o'-fire, who could not refrain from murmuring his sorrow that I had been obliged to let so favourable an opportunity of running one of the great parliamentary generals through the body slip by me unemployed.

"It would have paid off long Marston Moor," he said: and nothing I could reply would convince him that even had such an attempt been perfectly safe, it would have been base and unjustifiable. He could see that it was dangerous, circumstanced as we were,

clearly enough; but that there would be any thing wrong in killing a rebel, except when one had promised quarter, he could not comprehend at all. His ideas of hostility were perhaps more natural, though less civilized, than my own; and he could not fancy that when men were drawn up in battle array was to be the only time for bloodshed and strife; and that the same individuals, separated from their companions, might meet and reciprocate acts of even courtesy and friendship. In his eyes, the whole world was as a battle-field, and his enemy was his enemy whenever or wherever he met him. Such were the lessons he had learned in a hard and ruthless school; and finding that I could silence, but not convince him, I sent him to bed.

The following morning dawned brightly upon our departure; and, after discharging my score to the good landlord of the Pack-horse, we mounted our horses, and set out for Dover, to which town I was fain to turn my steps, from the uncertainty of procuring any passage to one of the ports of France nearer to the dwelling of my Emily.

My journey to the coast passed over without any thing worth noting, and therefore it may be as well to say no more than that we left London, and arrived at Dover in safety. Being now somewhat wealthier than when I had last passed on that road, I gave less attention perhaps to the sale of the horses that brought me from London than I had done in regard to those which had carried me to Calais. At all events, I sold them immediately, for a mere trifle, at the little town of Dover, though I regretted afterward that I had done so, when I found that there was no probability of a ship sailing for Calais for several days to come.

The next morning, however, I was awoke early by the news that a gentleman had just hired one of the small-decked vessels that frequent that port, to carry him across; and I instantly despatched the drawer, to inquire whether he was willing to give me a passage. The reply was courteous and kind, but accompanied with an injunction to make haste, as the tide was rising

fast, and in twenty minutes the vessel would sail. Before I was dressed the hirer of the boat was on board; and I was just in time to reach her side before she sailed.

My valise was instantly thrown in, and followed by little Ball-o'fire, I sprang up, and reached the deck just as she began to move from the shore. What was my surprise, however, when, advancing from behind the main-sheet, which was now beginning to fill, Walter Dixon himself stood before me! Whether my own face exhibited as much surprise as his I do not know; but I do not think it could have displayed very great calmness, or very great delight at his appearance; and we both instinctively laid our hands upon our swords. He recovered himself instantly, and, after looking at me with a smile for a full minute, during which he was doubtless laying out his plan of proceeding, he said,—

"So, Master Harry Masterton, in return for all the kind services that you have rendered me, I am to have the pleasure of carrying you to France in my vessel."

"Rest quite assured, General Dixon," I replied, "that had I known it to be yours, I should never have set foot upon its deck. Even now, were there any way of reaching the shore I would remain no longer."

"And why so, good youth?" he rejoined. "You are letting your passions get the better of your judgment, Master Harry, which is rather a fault of your family, let me tell you. Ay, even you yourself have it in no small degree, though you are a lad of sense, and have as much knowledge of the world—Heaven knows where you got it!—as would serve yourself and your brother too. But why give way to your passion, and quarrel with a good conveyance because Walter Dixon shares it?"

"Because," I replied, "I should imagine that my society would be fully as disagreeable to him as his is to me—without, indeed, he had some purpose to answer by consorting with me."

"I have none that I know of at present," he replied

coolly. "Perhaps I may think of some before the day be over, and then I shall use you as far as I can, of course. In the mean time, however, be assured that your society is not at all disagreeable to me; nor should mine be so to you, as, I think, when we can speak together alone, I shall be able to prove to you plainly."

"I do not see how that can be," I replied. "There is still much that I cannot forget."

"But if I show you," he rejoined, "that in all which has passed I could not act otherwise than I did, with any regard to reason?"

"Still, sir, I cannot look with pleasure on a serpent or a tiger," I replied, "though it be by instinct that they injure others."

"Indeed!" replied he, almost laughing. "There we do differ certainly. I think a snake, with his teeth drawn, a very pretty beast; and a tiger in a cage is a pretty beast too. The only thing which can make any thing appear hateful or ugly in my eyes is its power of injuring me. Take that away, and every thing is either pleasing or indifferent. Thus, you see, my charity extends a great deal farther than yours."

"It may do so," I replied; "but as I have not yet had the pleasure of seeing your charity produce any very good effects towards your fellow-creatures, you will excuse me for doubting its quality."

This kind of jarring conversation continued for some time longer; but still we did converse; and there was an easy sort of boldness about the man with whom I was now forced into companionship, an odd mixture of good-humoured frankness and impudent villany, that drove me from all the strongholds of reserve, and even anger, by which my mind was fortified against him. Gradually, from simply replying to his observations, or retorting somewhat rudely his sarcastic remarks, I was led on to more easy communion; and as we got farther to sea, and his servants with the sailors congregated in the bow of the vessel, we began to speak of the past events, in which we had both been engaged, without

treating each other with any great ceremony, indeed, but without any expressions of great animosity.

Of his own actions, and his own principles, Walter Dixon spoke without the slightest reserve; and I could not help remembering and applying the words of Ireton, who had called him a *blunt hypocrite*—a term which had struck me at first as implying a contradiction, but which, the more I considered the conduct of the man before me, I found to be the only words which really characterized him.

"I never conceal any thing," he said, while speaking of all that had passed. "I never conceal any thing, when the affair is done and over. I am perfectly willing to tell every one concerned how such a thing happened, or why I acted in such a manner. I desire heartily that everybody with whom I am likely to come in contact should know my character thoroughly. It is like in fighting a duel, in which case my adversary has a just right to know the arms which I oppose to him. If I do not beat him with them, it is my want of skill or courage; but I am never afraid of that."

"If such be the case then, Master Walter Dixon," I rejoined, "probably you will have no objection to explain to me a few of the particulars concerning the affairs we have had together; for though I know the general facts pretty well, yet there are some of the minor details which puzzle me a good deal."

"Why," he replied, "the whole affair is not quite over yet; and there are some little secrets which I choose to keep in reserve; but I will tell you a great deal more than you do know; and perhaps you may find that you have come to wrong conclusions on many subjects. First let me hear what you think you know. Then we shall see whether you are right."

He seemed not a little startled at hearing all I did know; and as I took good care to conceal the accident by which the greater part of my information was acquired, he replied, "You have either been dealing with the devil, or some one has betrayed me; and yet I know nobody who could do so, for some one took care

to silence the person who might have told most. However, as you know so much, I will tell you something more. Come, sit down here on this chest, and I will while away the time with a tale.

"My mother was the only sister of Lord Ashkirk," he proceeded, in the tone of one about to begin a narrative of his whole life. "He was a poor peer; and she made a foolish marriage with an attorney, Walter Dixon, by whom she had an only son, called also, as you know, Walter Dixon. Lord Ashkirk, however, was shrewd, and a courtier, and a papist; and about eighteen years ago, among the courtly dissensions which ushered in the reign, he contrived, with easy grace and faithful friendship, to betray his friend, who had been a little premature in taking advantage of this age's taste for high-treason. His friend was tried, condemned, and his estates forfeited; and Lord Ashkirk found means to insinuate to the monarch that the best reward for his important service, and the best compensation for the agonized feelings with which loyalty had compelled him to betray his friend, would be a grant of that friend's estates. The monarch viewed his piteous case in the same light that he did himself, granted him the estates, and instead of a poor peer, Lord Ashkirk was a rich one. As long as Lord Ashkirk was a poor peer, Walter Dixon the attorney, who was pretty well off in the world, and Walter Dixon's wife, had very little to do with Lord Ashkirk: but when Lord Ashkirk became a rich peer, it is wonderful what an affectionate brother and sister they showed themselves. Now Lord Ashkirk's estates would certainly have made a very pleasant addition to the property of his next akin; but it unfortunately fell out that the noble peer had one daughter, the Lady Eleanor Freerston; and though there are various ways of poisoning rats, yet arsenic sprinkled on bread and butter had been of late so fertile in halters that my father and mother would have nothing to do with it. They happily discovered, however, that first cousins might marry, even when one was a papist, by a dispensa-

tion; and consequently I was continually at the side of the Lady Eleanor, continually at the elbow of Lord Ashkirk. Under the counsels of my father, whose advice was somewhat bold, I plied my fair cousin with love in all forms; and found her perfectly willing that I, as well as every one else, should be her devoted slave; but when I went any farther, and talked of private marriages, et cetera, she was as cold as ice, and as freezing as the north-east wind."

As he went on, Walter Dixon bit his lip, and I could see that he was more deeply moved by the things he spoke of than he desired to show. He proceeded, however, in a moment, as calmly as ever. "Well, finding that the young lady, who had seemed the easiest game, was in fact the most difficult, I turned to the old lord, whose faculties, thank God, were not quite so keen as they had been; and by dint of flattering, and coaxing, and keeping all others away from him as much as possible, I at length, in a moment of softness, made him promise me his daughter's hand. His daughter declared her obedience; and, the happiest man in the world, I set off to let my respectable parents know the success of our endeavours. Unfortunately, during my absence, two popish gentlemen, who had been travelling together in Italy—one Sir Andrew Fleming, and the other a Monsieur du Tillet,—arrived at Penfordbourne, and you can guess the rest. Lord Ashkirk was a Cavalier and a papist, and I was attached to the parliament; but I had at best two thousand a year, and Sir Andrew Fleming had ten. He fell in love with the Lady Eleanor, and demanded her hand: the old peer had sometimes a short memory, and he forgot his promise to me. The young lady was still all obedience, and followed her father's example. The first news I heard was that the Lady Eleanor Freerston had become Lady Eleanor Fleming; and I came back with all speed, not to vent my fury in empty words, but to revenge myself the best way I could, by rendering the knight as unhappy in his marriage as he had rendered me by it. To my surprise, however, I found the post

of lover filled also; and Du Tillet, as it appeared to me, doing his dear friend Sir Andrew Fleming the good service of making love to his young wife. Whether it was so or not, I will not now be quite sure. However, I found that the marriage was likely to be as wretched as I could desire it. Sir Andrew was much older than his wife. Her heart went but little with the vow she pledged at the altar, and small was the harvest of love which the husband reaped from the unwilling wife. She was prodigal a little of her smiles to younger men —fond of adulation, flattery, and courtship; and beaming with beauty and with charms to every one but him who thought them his right. Those beams were indeed as the moonbeams, bright and cold; for she seemed to think a light laugh, or a dazzling smile, sufficient payment for the deepest love that man could show. I had not time indeed to try my power over her; for that Du Tillet, jealous, I believe, himself, took care to inflame the heart of his friend with the same feelings. Sir Andrew Fleming is one of the most deeply revengeful of men—almost as much so as myself. His jealousy excited him almost to insanity; but I was not a man to be turned from my path by any fears, and I measured blades secretly both with Du Tillet and Sir Andrew Fleming. Slightly wounded by the one, I was afterward stretched apparently lifeless on the greensward by the other. Their very success, however, promoted my designs. I was borne into the house, and so much kind tending did my fair cousin show, that her husband's wrath passed all bounds, threatened his intellect, and her life. It was found necessary to separate them; and Sir Andrew Fleming consented to relinquish the society of a woman whose coldness to himself but rendered her suavity to others the more terrible to his sight. But he did so alone upon the solemn promise from her father that I should never more enter the doors of his dwelling, and from herself that she would never willingly see me again."

I listened attentively to Walter Dixon's account of himself, for the history of such a man's life could never

be without its interest to one whose fate had been so materially influenced by his agency. I could not exactly see, however, how the long story he was telling affected the questions which I wanted resolved; and it is probable that some such feelings betrayed themselves in my countenance, for he proceeded, "I see you do not comprehend to what this tale points; or rather, like all other men, you are thinking, at every word I utter, how far it is relative to yourself. Well, you shall soon see. I did not *vow* revenge, as people call it; for those who take the trouble of vowing any thing are very sure at the moment they do vow that a time will come when their feelings will have changed, and that a vow may be necessary to steady their purpose. No, no, I did not vow revenge; but I resolved upon it, without a doubt of ever losing the desire. How far I followed it, and what success I have hitherto had, is another question, on which there is no need to speak. But at the same time that I took that resolve, I took another which I have pursued as keenly, and that was, to find means, in the course of events, to make that property mine which the marriage of my promised wife to another had torn from me. I determined that it should be so! and depend upon it, that if a man fixes his eyes steadfastly on one particular object in life, bends all his efforts and his thoughts to its attainment, never suffers himself either to be diverted by other pursuits, or rebuffed by difficulties, or scared by dangers, or stopped by those phantoms of the imagination with which nurses and priests fill the weak ears of children —depend upon it, I say, there are a thousand chances to one that he accomplishes his design. The times, too, were the most fortunate that could have happened for the attainment of my object. The civil war was shaking all the foundations of society; men's minds became thirsty for new changes and new notions, and there was no saying what transfer of property might take place, when all old rights were annulled. I eagerly embarked in the strife; of course, among the advocates of change, each of whom was following his

own particular purpose exactly as I was following mine: each of whom—covered under what pretence he would—strove for some private and selfish object; either wealth, power, fame, ambition, or, worst of all, fanaticism, as certainly as Walter Dixon, or the noblest Cavalier among your chivalrous party. We *were* all selfish alike—we *are* all selfish alike—we *shall be* all selfish alike to the end of the world. However, we did not all pursue our path with the same steady footsteps. I went on in the service, distinguished myself, as people term it, fought hard and well, and became Captain, Colonel, General Dixon; but still my object was the rich lands and estates of Penford-bourne. I canted with the fanatics, I harangued with the levellers, I raved with the fifth-monarchy men, but still my object was Penford-bourne. If I was successful in any attempt, the reward I required was that. If any accident happened to me, I strove so to turn it that it might bring me nearer that goal. In the mean time, my father, and mother, and uncle, all died; and a clerk of my father's took to serve in the army under me. He was clever, brave, villanous, and hypocritical, in a higher degree than most men; and having caught Lord Fairfax's attention, he was taken by him as a valet; on which occasion, wanting money, he plundered the good Presbyterian of all his moveable cash, and laid the blame upon a party of the enemy. I detected him, but instead of betraying poor Matthew Hutchinson, as some might have been foolish enough to do, I lauded his skill and ability, but only advised him to quit the service of the good Lord Fairfax. This he did; and received a high recommendation from that worthy general, to your father, under the name of Gabriel Jones.

"On my visit to Exeter, when first I met you, I discovered from my good cousin Habacuc Grimstone, all that passed in your neighbourhood; and having opened a communication with Gabriel Jones, I soon discovered that you were not all as pacific as you seemed. The levying of your forces was indeed well

concealed; but at length I discovered it, and magnifying the extent of your power, communicated it to the council of state. The whole country was in a state of anarchy; Cromwell was marching for Wales; Fairfax and Skippon had Goring, and Capel, and Hales, and Lucas, and Lisle, about their ears; and had nearly lost their wits with fright, when they heard of new force marching from Devonshire. I took care that you should meet with no opposition; for it was a part of my policy to frighten them all as much as possible; and every movement made to stop you, was instantly told to Gabriel Jones, and from him to your brother. At length I offered to delay your march by stratagem, if Fairfax and the rest would promise me Penford-bourne; and my plan was laid, to prove its mistress a rank malignant, and so give good excuse for forfeiture, while at the same time I made use of her as the means of deserving the reward, by staying your march. All that the generals could do was to promise their influence; but I thought that would be enough, and I joined you at Amesbury, as you remember, kept you clear of Hornsby's forces, and piloted you safe to Penford-bourne. There I gave timely notice to the fair dame of your arrival, conveyed to you plenty of false intelligence about the position of the forces, stopped your messengers to Lord Goring; and, in short, delayed you till the royalists were attacked at Wrotham—"

"But tell me," I interrupted, "did I, or did I not hear that accursed villain Jones conversing with some one called Avery, in the ruins of the old castle above Penford-bourne?"

"You heard him conversing with me," replied Walter Dixon; "and the name of Avery was that under which I lay concealed at Exeter. A hearty fright you gave us; but Hutchinson soon made his way back to the manor by the old private path, which I had shown him; and I lay concealed in the vaults till your troopers were gone. I gave your brother a worse alarm than that, though," he continued, "on that very night, when one of your messengers that I had safely imprisoned, as I

thought, made his escape, and returned to your quarters. I met the worthy lover wandering by night in the park, and musing by the melancholy moon. He saw a stranger, though I fled fast enough, my business being with Gabriel Jones, not him. He then pursued me sword in hand, when suddenly I disappeared among the old cells, leaving him to think he had seen a ghost. However, my plans, as you know, succeeded well: and by one witchery or another he was kept sufficiently long for Fairfax to have beaten Goring ten times over, if he had had any activity. Well, after that—"

"But tell me," I said, again breaking in upon the course of his story, "who was the man—for you of course know—by whose hand my brother had so near died on the morning of our march for Maidstone?"

"Did your brother never tell you?" demanded the other, in some surprise.

"Never," I replied. "I never asked him directly, it is true; but I did all but ask him, and he showed no disposition to give me any information on the subject."

"Nor will I then, either," said Walter Dixon. "That business is not yet ended; and I do not know what it may produce; therefore the least said on it the better."

"It could not be yourself with whom he fought," I rejoined; "for you were then in safe custody at the village."

"No, no! it was not with me," replied the other; and then, after musing a moment, he demanded, "Is your brother a good swordsman?"

"The best I ever saw," I replied; at which he looked up eagerly, demanding, "Then why did he not kill him?"

"His foot slipped, I believe," I answered; "but never on the greensward or in the fencing room did I see a better swordsman than Frank Masterton."

"Indeed!" he said eagerly, "indeed!" and then seeing me somewhat surprised at the interest he seemed to take in a matter of little concern to him, he added abruptly, "How infernally these little vessels pitch! But to go on with my story."

"But stay, Master Dixon," I said; "why do you wish so particularly to know my brother's skill in fencing?—You ask curiously on the matter."

"I may wish to know whether he is a man to be quarrelled with or not," replied the other with a grim smile, that announced his words to be one of those excuses to which we cannot well refuse currency, although we do not believe a word of them.

"But to go on with my story," continued Walter Dixon. "When the whole was over, the council of state found some specious excuse to refuse me the estates. What could I think? I fancied that the fair Lady Eleanor had some special friends among them; and I remembered that Ireton, General Cromwell's son-in-law, had once been nobly entertained at Penford-bourne. Half out of my senses with anger, I went down into Kent again, to catechise the lady herself. I found her in despair about your brother—a woman who, I had imagined, could love no earthly thing but her fair self, was mad with love of a raw boy from the heart of Devonshire. As I had served her once or twice in days of old, and she knew that what I undertook I would carry through, she prayed my help, as soon as she found that I had discovered how her heart stood. Our plan was soon laid; I perceived that she was willing to sacrifice every thing for him; and that he was willing to resign home, and family, and friends for her. Under such circumstances there was little difficulty; and I easily made my arrangements to gratify the loving turtles, by the same means that conveyed me the estate. I am always willing to do any good turn that may fall in my way; but in the present instance, there was a little spice of revengeful pleasure in the thought of seeing a woman who had trifled with my love, and sported with the passion of a thousand others, willingly like a moth burn her wings in the flame round which she played. To see her sacrifice virtue, reputation, fortune, and all the home luxuries she had been accustomed to from infancy, for—love! simple, blind, passionate, headstrong, absurd love! Then again,

when I thought of the effect it would have upon that deep-passioned, insane wretch Fleming, when he heard that his lovely wife, in whose every action—notwithstanding all that had passed, notwithstanding that to him she was as one dead—in whose every action he felt a profound and maddening interest, when he heard that she had blasted her own name and honour, by going off with your brother!"

"Very pleasant anticipations, indeed! Master Dixon," I replied, as he paused for a moment in his recital to contemplate the picture of vengeance he had raised up before his own eyes. "Very pleasant anticipations, indeed! but not very holy ones."

"Holy!" he exclaimed, with a bitter sneer. "There are but two things on earth, young man, that can gratify a strong heart, or a strong head—interest and revenge; and in what I proposed they were both combined; for the moment that the Lady Eleanor Fleming had fled the country with a known malignant, her estates could not be well refused, I thought, to one who had so well deserved them as I had. Accordingly Hutchinson, or Gabriel Jones, as you call him, was brought in play; and while he carried to and from Exeter sundry sweet love epistles for your brother, he bore intelligence for me of all that passed within the walls of Masterton House. I received at length copies of the replies of all the Cavaliers invited to your brother's wedding. I denounced the proposed assembly to the council of state as a royalist meeting for raising the whole of Devonshire, gained a warrant for the arrest of all the party, and set off post-haste to execute it myself. I need hardly tell you the rest. My idiot cousin Habacuc Grimstone detained us till we were nearly too late, in order to sing a psalm at Exeter. As you know, however, we arrived in time."

"And may I ask," I demanded, "what was the temptation to Master Gabriel Jones, so systematically to betray a family in which he had been used so kindly?"

"Oh, like a wise man, he never acted without two or three strong motives," replied Walter Dixon. "In the

first place, he coveted sundry services of gold and silver, which were to be his part of the spoil of the Egyptians; also a small estate in Dorsetshire, belonging to the Lords Masterton, which I promised my best efforts to obtain for him. Then he had a sweet and pious hankering after the charms of the bride.—Do not look so furious, Master Harry! Depend upon it, a valet-de-chambre has as good right to covet his master's bride as a younger to covet his elder brother's. But the strongest and most unchangeable motive of Gabriel Jones to hate and destroy your family was, that you were malignants—that you were of a different creed from himself. He could pardon those who were of no religion at all, or any that suited the time, like myself; but he could not pardon those who were the opponents of his own sect; and he would have destroyed you all, root and branch, if his good-will had had its way. His commanding without any right or reason the men to fire, when they were too willing to obey, was proof enough of his hatred. If some one had not shot him in the scuffle, I believe I should have shot him myself, for involving us all in such an affray. And now have you any thing more to ask? for I am as frank and free as the day, and will tell you candidly, what I tell you at all."

"There is a great deal more yet, Master Dixon," I replied. "In the first place, pray why did you pursue me so fiercely, when in fact my brother was the only person you wanted of the whole?"

"Because your name was in the warrant," he answered, "and I was obliged, at all events, to seem to do my duty. Besides, I longed very much to repay you a kind imprisonment to which you subjected me in Kent; and I am one of those who always like to give back interest along with the principal sum. Is there any thing more?"

"You have not yet told me the ultimate fate of my brother," I replied.

"Oh! I thought you must have heard all that in London," answered Walter Dixon. "He contrived to effect his escape by the means of the Lady Eleanor

Fleming, whose handiwork I took care should be sufficiently apparent in the whole business. When last I left them, they were cooing like turtle-doves; but the news of your father's death reached him, I hear, afterward, for he had not seen him fall. Those tidings saddened him, they say, a great deal, and I did not see him again before they set out together for France. The rest of the Cavaliers who were taken easily proved that they were merely invited to a wedding, and will get free with a little fine and imprisonment. I am the worst off of all; for after having laboured for the state as boldly and as busily as most, I am still denied my reward, because Fleming happens to be protected by Mazarin."

"What, then, is your purpose now?" I demanded, innocently enough.

"Nay, nay, Master Henry, your pardon there," replied my companion. "The past is the property of every one—the future is my own. I care not who knows what I have done—but I do not love that people should know what I may do. Some people call me a hypocrite, but they do so falsely—I am quite willing that all the world should know—"

"Every thing but what you choose to conceal," I rejoined.

"True," he replied; "but my character, and the principles on which I act—I make no concealment there—I deceive no one in regard to them."

"Is it not for the purpose of deceiving them more successfully in after things?" I demanded.

"How so?" he said.

"By throwing them off their guard by general candour, till they take the individual deceit you wish, as matter of fact too," I replied. "Just as you must have seen an artful fencer, Master Dixon, lunge loose sometimes, till by a close feint he hits his antagonist on the heart."

He paused musing for a moment, and then replied coolly, "Perhaps it may be so—The sea is getting calmer."

CHAPTER III.

There are some men who, sooner than not talk of themselves at all, would talk of their own shame; and Walter Dixon might possibly be one of these. Nevertheless, I think that he had deeper motives, and he was deceived if, as I believe, he sought by the bold sketch of his own character which he had just given, to make me his dupe in other respects. I certainly never doubted that he was fully as bad, remorseless, and artful as he had pictured himself—and that was surely bad enough. But I did not give him the least credit for the candour he assumed. I concluded that it was entirely a piece of acting, and as pure hypocrisy as the religion of the fifth-monarchy men.

Doubtless he had in some degree painted his character as it really was; but then he knew that I had previously formed my own appreciation of it much in the same manner; and he risked little in acknowledging qualities which I already attributed to him. At the same time it is to be remarked that all the principal facts which he narrated I before knew, or must soon have learned; and that the evil qualities which he owned, such as selfishness, cunning, and revenge, he looked upon as virtues when joined with courage, perseverance, and skill, though I regarded them as vices under any combination.

On the whole, therefore, he made a great display of candour at a small cost. But if he did it purposely to throw me off my guard, an opinion which after circumstances confirmed, he was very much mistaken. Not that I ever proposed to compete in cunning and policy with a man whose whole life had been expended in following the narrow and tortuous paths of deceit; but I resolved carefully to avoid him, as I would some loathsome

animal; not alone from the hatred I bore him, as the active agent in the infinite evils which had already befallen my family, but as a dangerous and uncertain companion, on whose conduct I could never count with security either in good or evil. The first of these feelings, nevertheless, I could hardly subdue, although I felt that I could not seek a personal quarrel with a man, because he had injured me in the service of another party to which he belonged; but I believe it was the evident and unconcealed selfishness of his views, even in the service of that other party, which made me far more rancorous in my abhorrence of him, than I felt towards Fairfax, Ireton, Cromwell, or any other of the parliamentary leaders, who had done far more injury to my country or myself than he had.

Even Habacuc Grimstone, who had used every means in his small power to effect the ruin of my family, I viewed with less individual antipathy than I did Walter Dixon; and although my life had grown into more consequence in my eyes since the love of Emily Langleigh had given new value to existence, I would willingly have crossed swords with him, if he had afforded me any fair excuse of rendering our quarrel personal. He took care not to do so, however; for though he was, I believe, totally without fear, yet he looked upon life as the means of accomplishing his purposes, and enjoying his desires—and he took as much care of it as of any other valuable property.

When I had embarked for France on board the same vessel with Walter Dixon, I had contemplated proceeding at once to Paris for the purpose of tracing my brother; but as I found, from some casual words that fell from my parliamentarian that I should have the same unwished-for companion all along the road to the capital, I determined to return to Brittany at once, and thence conduct Emily and Lady Margaret to the French metropolis.

This change of purpose I took care, however, to conceal; and we landed at Calais with the apparent design of both proceeding to Paris the next morning. I

nevertheless sauntered out into the town, before I went to bed, and found my two Brittany horses still in the hands of the *maquignon* to whom I had sold them. A small advance of price soon made them mine once more; and before it was daylight next morning I descended to the *salle à manger*, where I was despatching a rapid breakfast in the full expectation of bidding adieu to Master Dixon for ever, as I believed him to be too devoted a voluptuary to quit his bed before high noon—when, to my astonishment, he entered the same apartment, and seated himself opposite to me.

"I remembered you were an early riser," he said—demanding his breakfast at the same time, without any other comment on my purpose of setting out without him—"I remembered you were an early riser, and therefore rose just three hours before my time."

As far as Abbeville our roads lay together, and therefore, as it did not suit me to explain either the object or the direction of my journey, I determined to let him accompany me so far; and once there, to quit him either openly or secretly, as I found most convenient. On mounting our horses, I was somewhat surprised to find that he journeyed on alone; and seeing my astonishment, as he was a great interpreter of looks, he replied at once to my thoughts, by saying, "They" (meaning his servants)—"they follow in an hour or two. Your rapid movements have thrown their preparations behindhand."

We now rode on upon our way with tolerable good-humour on both parts. The horse which he also had bought while we were at Calais was a more showy beast than either of mine, but not near so strong; and he proceeded slowly in order to spare its strength. As if by mutual consent, we avoided all allusion to the subjects which had rendered our conversation of the day before painful though interesting; and I amused myself with tracing, as we went forward, the workings of his dark and subtle mind, which regarded every thing that he saw, whether it was a beautiful scene, or a fleeting cloud, or a group of peasants at a cabaret,

with a strange reference to himself. It seemed as if nature had given him a power, in passing through the universe in which she had cast him, to extract in an instant, from every object of every kind, its relationship to his own interests, or his own wishes, or his own enjoyments. Self in his nature was not, as in that of other men, the predominant principle; but it was the absorbing whole,—and I verily believe that he never wasted a thought upon any thing but inasmuch as it affected self.

Not long after passing Marquise, just as we had mounted the little hill, and were riding leisurely onward, a traveller who had taken the post, and was galloping along with his postillion at a great rate, rode by us, scarcely pausing to give us a passing salute.

"That is a fellow of Hyde's," cried Walter Dixon, as he passed. "Perhaps we might get some tidings from him, if we could catch him;" and, setting spurs to his horse, he rode after the traveller as fast as possible.

On the other side of the hill is a deep sort of wooded glen, where four valleys meet, with a little stream running through it; and at the bifurcation of the road, which here branches into two, is planted a little drinking house, where the postillions stop to breathe their horses, and take their stated portion of strong waters. We had seen the traveller and his companion go over the hill, and into the valley; but, on looking down from the top of the rise, we could descry no traces of them. Their horses were not, as we might have expected, standing at the door of the little cabaret; and we rode down, passed the inn-window—from which a woman's face was gazing at us—and taking the road that, winding through the wood, had been hidden from us as we stood above, proceeded quickly on our way.

Suddenly, however, General Dixon pulled in his rein. "We may be wrong yet," said he. "Have you any objection to turn back, and ask at that cabaret which is our right way?"

"None in the world," I answered; "and the more readily because I thought I heard a distant cry for help."

We were not more than three hundred yards from the place, and turning at once, we galloped back towards it. Another cry met our ears just as we drew the rein; and as we came nearer, loud sounds of expostulation and entreaty were heard distinctly, proceeding from the open windows of the cabaret. Before exactly quitting the shelter of the wood, we dismounted, and tying our horses to the trees, walked on as quickly as possible, while the sounds of lamentation, and sorrow, and terror became more and more loud each moment. We had heard many a report of robbers on the way while we were at Calais; and those sounds immediately led us to conclusions which required no verbal communication to show each of us what his companion was thinking of. We looked in each other's faces, and that was quite enough.

"They are murdering that poor devil of Hyde's," whispered Walter Dixon at length: "I know his voice: —what shall we do? Shall we lay on, a' God's name, as Habacuc would say, and take the chance of the odds? or shall we mind the good old rule, and keep our own fingers out of the fire?"

"Lay on, in God's name," replied I; "we are both well armed, and two strong men. The postillion will make a third."

"The postillion!" exclaimed he with a sneer, which was fully justified afterward. "The postillion!—but never mind—on, on, good Master Harry! and I will back you without flinching—on my soul,—the servants will soon be here too, and here is your boy, as good as half a dozen." As he spoke, he pushed me forward to the door, which was open, and advancing along a narrow passage as silently as possible, I came to a smaller door on the left-hand, from which abundance of doleful sounds were proceeding.

"I have nothing more! indeed I have nothing more!"

cried a voice from within, in execrable bad French and a strong English tone; "search me as much as you like, but spare my life, gentlemen!"

A thunder of mixed French and English oaths followed, while a female tongue was heard exclaiming, with much of the precision of a cuckoo clock, and about the same degree of feeling, "Mon Dieu, c'est terrible! Bon Dieu, c'est abominable! Messieurs! Messieurs, ayez pitié, je vous en prie—je vous conjure! Mon Dieu! Bon Dieu!" &c. &c.

As she spoke, I pushed open the door, and a scene presented itself which had something in it both shocking and ludicrous. The room was evidently the common room of a cabaret, and on a table in one corner stood glasses and bottles, and all the implements for quenching thirst. The middle of the chmaber, however, was quite cleared, as if to give a fair arena, which appeared unencumbered by any furniture but one chair that lay overthrown on the ground, supporting the head of the traveller who had passed us, as two stout men held him down, one of whom was busily rifling his person, while the other calmly held a pistol to his head. Close by, with a rope in her hand—as if either to remind the two active personages on the stage of the usual end of their doings, or to assist in binding the hands of the more passive of the performers—stood the mistress of the house, whose face we had seen watching us through the window as we passed the inn at first. This good lady's appearance was any thing but prepossessing, though it certainly bore the marks of jaded beauty, the fair traces of which were almost worn out by many a vice besides drunkenness. I think I never in my life beheld a more complete picture of apathy than her countenance presented while standing by with the rope in her hand, she uttered, by rote, the words which I have mentioned.

The man who presented the pistol was a tall long-bearded gentleman, whose features were not bad, but whose face and person altogether presented that strange unhappy look which is only given by thorough de-

bauchery. There was in it, too, the air of careless frivolity, so much assumed by the English Cavaliers, and he held the murderous weapon to his victim's head as a fop might hold a pouncet-box. His dress had once been handsome, and its good fashion made it, at first sight, appear strange in such a scene, till the eye detected some rather anomalous patchings and darnings; which, like a forced simile patched on a good piece of eloquence, only served to show where the original foundation was somewhat ragged.

Before they were aware of our presence we caught a part of their brief colloquy. "What does she say?" demanded the man who was rifling the fallen traveller, alluding to something the woman whispered to the other, just as we entered.

"Damn the ——," replied the pistol-bearer in English, "she asks why we do not shoot him, to make all safe."

"The best way too!" grumbled the other; but at that moment a loud scream from the lady of the house, who at the same instant dropped the rope, and clasped her hands in an attitude of interesting surprise, announced to her companions the presence of unexpected witnesses; and, starting from their less important avocation, they faced us at once, while pistols were levelled and swords drawn on both sides. The traveller started from the floor, and armed himself suddenly with a chair, for his sword had been taken from him; the woman screamed aloud; the worthy plunderers shouted threats against the *matin de postillon*, who, as they thought, had betrayed them; and what would have followed I do not know, had not Walter Dixon suddenly dropped the muzzle of his pistol, and casting himself into one of the chairs by the window, burst into a loud and uncontrollable fit of laughter.

The sounds of mirth, at such a moment, had the exact reverse effect of Orpheus's lyre, and every one, instead of dancing, stood stock still, gazing on the person who could find matter for merriment in so serious a scene. Still, however, Walter Dixon laughed on, and

in a moment or two afterward I thought I began to see the brow of the pistol-bearing gentleman smooth a little down; and a sort of faint grin of recognition came over his countenance.

"Ha, ha, ha!" cried Walter Dixon; "ha, ha, ha! good Master Daintree! dearly beloved Master Daintree! what, have three short years brought thee to this summary mode of recruiting the exchequer? Ha, ha, ha! But still thou art right! Stand and deliver! is thy trade, take my word for it. Thou art too hasty to win a fortune by the ivory islands, surrounded by their sea of leather. Forswear the dice-box, Master Daintree, and look well to the priming, and thou mayst yet be a great man, and reach an elevated station. Ha, ha, ha! Mind you that night when we—"

"Not a word of that, sir!" cried the other, colouring till his bronzed cheek grew of the hue of a horn lantern newly lighted; "not a word of that, sir, I say!"

But still Walter Dixon laughed on. "Ha, ha, ha! That worthy," he cried, turning to me, "that worthy, with the pistol in his hand and the ominous countenance, as if he would shoot me in the middle of my tale—that worthy, some five years ago, was a gay and ruffling Cavalier, who made himself fine in doublets that he had not paid for, and drunk with wine that other folks supplied; when, lo and behold, suddenly finding himself hard pressed for cash, too well known to find lenders, and there being none in the royal camp from whom he could steal, he puts on a sober look and a sour suit, and comes up to London to find some weak brother of the Independent creed, who was given to the carnal abomination of gaming. There he met with one Walter Dixon, for whom he did some good services in a bold way, and having found some birds he deemed he could gull, he set to work in hopeful style, lost a few pieces, won a few more; but greediness forgot caution —he got on too quick—was detected, and—shall I tell the rest?

But no," he added, after a moment's pause. Whether

he saw any thing dangerous in the fellow's face or not I cannot tell. "But no," he added, "we will not mind the rest; and now, good Master Daintree, I am sorry to spoil your sport; but you have got all you can from this worthy person, who handles the chair he has in his hand like Hercules his club, and you must let me have a few words with him. I may have some occupation for you myself."

"Oh, certainly, Master Dixon," replied the other, "certainly! Zounds, speak your fill to him. Every man should have time to speak, whether he is to die or live."

Walter Dixon now accordingly advanced to the poor traveller, who had stood by, listening to all that had passed, with little participation in the jocularity which my excellent companion had evinced, but expecting every minute to hear something which might decide his fate. He then spoke to him for a few minutes in a whisper, though what he learned or sought to learn I never discovered. In the mean while the two thieves conversed also in an under voice, and it seemed to me that they were consulting as to the propriety of making their escape as fast as possible. Probably the position which I maintained near the door decided them to remain, for after a moment they became silent again, and turned their eyes towards the other two. The traveller, whoever he was, seemed in no mood to refuse any information; and after some brief questions, General Dixon turned to the others, saying, "Now, good Master Daintree, you must let this gentleman go."

"No, d—n me if he shall," cried the one who, when we entered, had been holding the traveller down, "not till I see what he has in that other pouch of his."

"He shall not?" asked Walter Dixon, whose eye I had seen glance twice towards the window, "he shall not, did you say?" and he calmly cocked the pistol he had in his hand.

"No, he shall not!" said the other dogged villain, who, it now appeared, was an Englishman also; and, indeed it was unhappily too frequent at that time to see

our countrymen in the capacity in which these two appeared, especially on the roads in the immediate neighbourhood of the French coast; which many of them reached, after bearing a share in the civil wars, perfectly destitute in circumstances, and hardened by long familiarity with scenes of bloodshed, vice, and improvidence.

"No, he shall not, I say!" reiterated the desperado; but at that moment there was the sound of several horses on the road, and Walter Dixon, leaning towards the window, exclaimed, "Halt there without! Now, sir," he added, turning to the other, "without any wish to interfere with the execution of your very honourable calling, I have only to say to you, that you have had this worthy personage for at least five minutes at your clear disposal —a space of time quite as long as any reasonable man could desire to have his hands in another man's pockets. There are my servants, as you may see, four in number, and I have only to tell you that you must, without another word, suffer this gentleman to walk out of the door, mount his horse, and ride on with the honest postillion who brought him here—and who can call for his share as he comes back—or I must mount you and your friend (and my friend also) Monsieur Daintree, behind one of my fellows, and carry you into Abbeville, as the prelude to a farther journey by a speedier conveyance."

Such an appeal was not to be resisted. The man acquiesced with dogged sullenness: but Master Daintree, who seemed to have every reliance upon Walter Dixon's secrecy and friendship, acted as mediator upon the occasion, introduced his friend Captain Wighton, whom the worthy general received with mock ceremony and politeness, and then ushering forth the unhappy traveller, whispered a warning in his ear well calculated to make him silent for some miles at least.

I am afraid, however, that other means were resorted to for the purpose of ensuring his discretion in regard to what had occurred to him on the road, for I never could hear that he reached his destination. It is not

unlikely, indeed, that the postillion's fears might prove even more dangerous to him than those of the robbers. But to return to ourselves, Walter Dixon seemed to feel astonishingly little horror or detestation at the trade of the two ruffians who remained beside us; and assuring them that Paris was the only place for men of their talents to thrive, he desired to see them if they journeyed thitherward, and gave them the means of finding him when they came.

We then mounted our horses and rode away, and as we proceeded, I could not forbear commenting on his behaviour. He replied only with his usual sneering laugh.

"By my faith!" said he, "that is always the way with you Cavaliers. You are less charitable to your own party than we parliamentarians are. Now, those two men are both of them as excellent royalists as ever lived. Nay, you need not turn so red, Master Harry Masterton. I said not all Cavaliers are thieves, though some thieves are Cavaliers. One of those men I know to be a Cavalier—that Master Daintree. He had once a little property; was a reckless bold boy; grew up a reckless brave man, and as honourable as all men are, till they want money. Soon, however, he got poor; and drank a little, as the best comfort in poverty, and gambled a little, as the best remedy. All was fair at first, but somehow, between drinking and gambling, a man soon begins to see a little confusedly in matters of honour, and to risk somewhat more than his money upon the game. Daintree got blasted in the royal army, and then because he had pigeoned a few fools of thick-headed Cavaliers, he thought he could cope with Presbyterians and Independents. With this view he staid about six months in London, where he did me a few of those little services that I needed in various ways; and the last time I saw him was in a house where he was acting the part of football to about twenty very godly feet, the heads belonging to which he had foolishly thought it within his poor capacity to cheat. He called lustily for my help, which I afforded him by

adding the last kick, that sent him rolling out into the street, and I have never seen him since till this day."

With various anecdotes of such persons and their manifold plans of proceeding Walter Dixon amused the way, and nothing afterward happened on our journey to Abbeville which is worth recording. At that town I found it easier to quit my companion, without either explanation or discussion, than I expected. We arrived towards night, and declaring that he had not had one fair night's rest since we had travelled together, Walter Dixon announced his intention of sleeping for two hours longer the following day than he usually had done, especially as our horses were somewhat fatigued with our last day's journey. I rose very early, however, and broke my fast with all calmness. Little Ball-o'-fire was never behind, and hiring a flat-bottomed boat to carry us across the river, we soon put the Somme between us and our unsafe companion, and as the sun rose high, were once more on horseback, and again wending gladly onward towards Dinan.

I know few feelings on earth half so joyful as that with which one sets out to rejoin a person one loves, after a brief absence. It is hope's own pilgrimage; and never did I feel the influence of life's fairy guide more sweetly than on that journey into Brittany. Oh how she made all the world smile around me as I thought of Emily Langleigh! Nor was it a slight pleasure to be freed from Walter Dixon. His presence had sat upon the happiness of my return like an incubus; and the pleasant and honourable friends he had recognised on the road had not served to make his company less oppressive. Freed from him, I now seemed to breathe more easily; there was a load off my breast, and the prospect of the rest of my journey was all delight. The weather, indeed, was beginning to be broken, and many an autumnal shower drenched me to the skin as it flew over my head on the wings of the swift equinox. I heeded them but little, however, and journeyed on from day to day with a glad heart at the diminished distance. It is true, at times,

as I stood upon some high hill and cast my eyes over the wide woods, covered with the dying hues of autumn and waving in the melancholy wind, vague shadows of my own mortality would seem to float across the sunshine of my mind; and, without knowing why, I would shrink at the mystery of being, and the strange obscure relationship between myself and all around me, with my flesh of dust and withered leaves, and my spirit all unknown and mysterious even to itself.

Such fits forced themselves on me but seldom, and were the fruit of the silence in which I proceeded; for my little page, with all the activity and eagerness of his age, had none of its loquacity; and though anxious to learn and comprehend every thing as we passed on, a few brief words ever sufficed him to ask his question or to make his observation.

About the eighth day of my journey I began to feel impatient. I had been rather indulging too in a fit of gloom, when I was tempted to commit one of the greatest follies that a human being can practise; namely, to take a short cut.

The person who seduced me into this path was an old woman of whom I asked the way; and who told the straight road too, but at the same time she assured me the cross road was a good hour shorter. We were at that moment on the top of a height, which commanded the greater part of the country round: and I could see the spires of the town to which I was going rising in the gray evening, out of the trees in the far distance. I have often thought since, how often man in his journey through life, whether he be the private individual plodding on his own way, or the minister guiding forward the wild and stubborn horses of national policy; how often in his journey through life he is tempted in the same way to the same folly. He stands for a moment on a spot from whence he can see laid out, as on a map, a thousand various paths wandering through the land before him. He quits the high road, long and tedious as it seems, and beaten by the feet of thousands; and takes what seems the short and direct

way to his object, as it lies before him distinct in the distant prospect; but as he descends from the eminence his general view gets lost and perplexed; he finds the by-road rough, tortuous, hilly, perhaps impassable; others spread out from it on either side, so like itself he knows not which is the right; he wastes his time in conjecture; chooses the wrong, and gets more and more entangled, till weary, late, and exhausted, some charitable hand leads him back to that same high road which he quitted so much in vain.

The straight road and the short cut, indeed, were both before my eyes, and the fault was all my own; but the wind rushed loud and chill, it was growing late, and gathered all round the dim sky were mountainous masses of dull leaden clouds, threatening to pour an absolute deluge on the earth as soon as the sun should go down. Every thing, even to the faint white glare of the heaven, over which a gauze of mist was drawn, counselled speed; and I was foolishly induced, as I have before said, to take the short cut.

I soon discovered that the road, which was good enough at the beginning, got very bad before it reached the middle; and as it entered a forest on its way, the deep and uncertain ruts left by the wood carts, and filled with water by the late showers, nearly broke my horse's legs if I attempted to go fast. In the mean time the light waxed gray and more gray, and the melancholy whistling of the wind among the tall tree-tops reminded me how soon those clouds must come up which I had seen gathering on the horizon; while the dull splashing of our horses' feet in the deep channels and puddles of the way commented sadly on what we were to expect, and upbraided me at every step for my folly in taking the short cut.

Nothing could be done, however, but to ride on; and ride on we did, as fast as it was possible, eying wistfully, every two or three hundred yards, some of the long avenues of the forest, and wondering whether we might not there find a better road. Every instant as it passed took away some portion of light; and the

clouds, which now came rolling over our heads, added to the natural darkness of the hour. The incessant roar of the equinoctial gale through the tall thin birches that now filled up the centre of the forest began to be mingled with the pattering of the rain; and, drenched without remedy, we rode on, with our boots full of water, and the gusts of wind driving fresh torrents continually into our faces.

It did not long continue evening. No blessed twilight intervened; and all was darkness, so dark indeed that I could not see the horse I sat upon. Trusting to the animal's instinct, I gave it the bridle; but it seemed to have as much difficulty in seeing its way as I had in guiding it; and cautiously picking its steps along the swampy ground, it carried me at about a mile by the hour, beaten by the hurricane, and drenched by the deluge that was falling from the sky.

This was not to be endured for long; and at length, using whip and spur, I forced the beast on, though both of us pursued our course in utter blindness. Shortly after I found myself rising, as the horse's fore-feet mounted a hill, and the next moment a severe blow on the knee showed me that I had run against either a tree or a post. Little Ball-o'-fire coming up, we examined with our hands what we could not discern with our eyes, and found that the object which had stopped me, and occasioned me no small pain, was a finger-post in the midst of one of the cross roads, raised on a little mound of turf.

Of no earthly use was it in our present circumstances; and, indeed, it served a purpose for which it was certainly not intended, that of making us lose our way still farther; for in going round it to ascertain what it was, we missed the direction in which our horses' heads had been first turned, and which was probably the right one. We were now obliged to trust to chance entirely for our further guidance; and resuming the slow pace which I had quitted to little purpose, I followed the first path which the horse chose for itself; and after wending slowly forward for nearly another hour, I perceived

by a slight increase of light that we had emerged from the forest. Little advantage, however, did we derive from this circumstance, for though I could see my hand when I held it up, I could not see an inch of the road over which I was travelling; and we were now a thousand-fold more exposed to the drifting rain and the wind, which nearly drove us off our horses.

Thus chilled to the heart, dripping, tired, and miserable, we proceeded for another hour, with the darkness waxing and waning according to the different opacity of the clouds that were driven fiercely over the sky. At length my eye caught a light at some distance, gleaming faintly through the loaded air. A moment after we lost it again, as we passed some low wood; but it speedily reappeared, and alternately catching it, twinkling in the distance, and missing it altogether, we rode on till it began certainly to grow nearer and more distinct. After a time, however, we again lost sight of it; and I was pushing forward in hopes of regaining it, when my horse showed a most stubborn inclination to turn to the right, and as it was the first time throughout the whole journey that I had found him steady in maintaining his own opinion, I gave him his way I soon found that he was carrying me up a long avenue of trees; and the voluntary acceleration of his pace gave strong evidence that he at least perceived he was approaching some human dwelling. At length the light again reappeared; and in a few minutes our beasts' hoofs clattered over the stones which paved the large court belonging to a handsome château.

For several minutes I sought about for some of the usual means of making myself heard; but not finding any, I was fain to have recourse to those which nature had furnished me withal; and I shouted as loud as I could bellow. Such sounds soon brought out some lackeys with a lantern; and while one, judging my quality I suppose by the vehemence of my vociferation, sprang to hold my horse, I related my plight to another, and claimed shelter and hospitality for the night.

The man replied that he would inform his master;

and after dismounting, little Ball-o'-fire and myself were shown into a large dining-room, hung with handsome tapestry, while a table laid with two covers, and a blazing fire of old beech, presented preparations for refreshment, and signs of comfort, which might have increased our reluctance to change our lodging for the night, had we been compelled to do so by the inhospitality of the lord of the dwelling.

The servant left us by the fire, while he proceeded to a door on the other side of the hall, which being opened, he announced our arrival and condition to some one within; describing our situation with a general enumeration of all the miseries of wet, and dirt, and fatigue, and hunger. In truth, as the man proceeded, I could not help feeling that I must present a most wretched and vagabond appearance indeed, and doubted much whether the master of the mansion, if he came forth to examine us in person, would permit such an ill-looking scoundrel as the servant pictured me to remain a minute longer than necessary in his house.

There was a cheerful blaze of light, however, issued forth through the open door from the inner chamber, which had something in it comfortably hospitable; and I soon had the satisfaction of finding that the good lackey's description of our state and appearance had not received the slightest attention; for some one within who had been speaking when he entered went on all the while; and the cessation of the servant's voice allowed me to hear the harangue the other was addressing to some third person.

The words—"And truly, as I was saying, if there be any means of healing painful memories you will find them in France, which is not only a garden of ever new delights, but is a garden which in itself contains a thousand fountains of consolation, of whose waters, with that exquisite liberality of feeling for which, above all the nations upon earth, the French—What is it François? Is the supper ready?"—these words at once convinced me that I should meet with an acquaintance in one of the guests, if not in the master of the dwelling.

The servant told his story again, but with somewhat less minuteness; and I heard an immediate bustle within. "A stranger!" cried the same voice. "Lost his way! drenched in the rain! Show him in. Bon Dieu! why did you not show him in? For the honour of France, which is, without any comparison, the most hospitable country in Europe, you should not have hesitated a moment on his admission. Show him in! show him in! Have something more added to the supper, and light a fire in the mirror chamber."

The servant now announced that monsieur would be glad to see me, if I would walk forward into the cabinet beyond; and I accordingly presented myself in a moment to my worthy acquaintance Monsieur de Vitray. He had prepared himself with somewhat of a theatrical attitude to receive the belated traveller; and before he perceived who it was, he had taken two steps forward on the tip of his toe, and made two bows; the one distant and reserved, the other more familiar and courteous. But as I approached into the full light, and his memory came to his aid, he skipped forward at once, took me in his arms, and embracing me with the most overpowering demonstrations of regard, welcomed me to his château with, I believe, unfeigned joy.

My eyes now fell upon the person with whom he had been conversing; and, while I replied to my friend's civility, I had a full view of his companion, who sat with his glance fixed upon the fire, taking very little notice of what was passing around him.

He was apparently a Benedictine monk; and had doubtless been in former years a very handsome man, though there was nothing peculiarly striking in his features. His cowl was thrown back, and the shaved head with its ring of grizzled black hair that fringed the tonsure gave a very peculiar character to his countenance, which seemed lengthened and attenuated by the want of the garniture with which it is furnished by nature. His beard, on the contrary, had been suffered to grow very long; and though originally as black as ink, was now thickly mingled with white hairs. In com-

plexion he was deadly pale, and would have looked almost like a statue, had not his heavy eyebrows overhung as bright and sparkling a pair of deep black eyes as ever flashed from a human countenance. He was evidently deep in thought when we came in, and remained without rising with his glance fixed upon the fire, while his whole countenance assumed, from the very intensity of his gaze, a look of sternness and almost ferocity which the features did not seem calculated to convey.

Monsieur de Vitray, after having in vain attempted to call the Benedictine's attention to an introduction he endeavoured to effect between us, urged my proceeding to the chamber he had ordered to be prepared, for the purpose of changing my dripping dress. This would not have been easily accomplished—as, although I was plentifully supplied as far as under-garments went, I had not taken the pains to purchase myself a complete change of attire when I habited myself in mourning at Calais—but my worthy host accompanied me himself to my chamber, and insisted upon my putting on his black velvet morning-gown, and thus descending to the supper-table.

The monk had apparently exhausted the train of thought in which he had been engaged at our first entrance; for on our return to the small cabinet in which we left him he rose, and soon joined our conversation as a man of talent and knowledge of the world. There was something of stern austerity, indeed, pervaded his manners; but withal, there mingled in the webs of all his ideas a thread of deep feeling which gave a splendid hue to the whole texture. The secret, I believe, of exciting the sympathies of our fellow-creatures, and awaking an interest for ourselves in the bosoms of others, is this alone—to feel deeply; not as some men do, to let our minds dance like a light waterfly on the current of all events; but to have hearts which, like a fine instrument, give back full and distinct tones to all that touches them, whether the chords that are struck be gay or gloomy, be tuneful or discordant.

Notwithstanding the rigour and sternness of the Benedictine's demeanour, and what appeared to me a frivolous attention to minute forms—the crossing of his breast, the long and silent prayer, the plate of herbs and the cup of cold water,—yet there was a power and an intensity in all his thoughts that commanded attention and interest. There was a degree of fancifulness too in his conversation, notwithstanding its austere gravity, which gave it a singular and exciting character. Nothing was mentioned—not the most trifling circumstance—but had its peculiar associations in his mind; and those often so remote, and at first sight so irrelevant, that the thoughts of his hearers were obliged to labour after, startled and yet not shocked by the rapid progress of his.

I remember two or three instances, though perhaps not the most striking ones, which occurred in the course of our conversation during that evening. We spoke of the wind, as it howled, and whistled, and rushed past the old building, as if in anger at the massive walls which defied its power.

"In France," said Monsieur de Vitray, "our glorious climate is so happily tempered to our benignant soil, that these gales, which happen only at the equinoxes, find our seed sown and safely germed in the spring, and our fruits gathered and corn granaried in the autumn. They then come to clear and purify the air for the rest of the year."

"Hark how it howls!" said the monk, taking his own peculiar view as the clamorous raging of the importunate blast compelled attention to its angry murmurs. "Hark how it howls! telling of shipwreck, and desolation, and death. Wo to the sea-tossed mariner! Wo to the anxious and expectant wife that, waiting the sailor's or the fisherman's return, hears the furious voice of the tempest trumpeting his death at the shaking door of her poor cabin! Wo to the lordly merchant whose wealth is on the main, and who hears in every gust the tidings of ruined speculations, and broken hopes, and bankruptcy, and shame! Well has Satan been called the prince of the powers of the air

and never do I hear the equinoctial blasts go howling and revelling through the pathless sky, without thinking it may be that the evil spirits that hover round mankind are then for a season unchained to ride careering over the earth, and in the agony of their joy to work their will of mischief and dismay."

We spoke of the rain; and I, foolishly enough, in mentioning all the annoyance it had occasioned me, loaded it with maledictions.

"Call it not accursed, my son," said the monk. "Oh, no! remember that every drop that falls bears into the bosom of the earth a quality of beautiful fertility. Remember that each glorious tree, and herb, and shrub, and flower owes to those drops its life, its freshness, and its beauty. Remember that half the loveliness of the green world is all their gift; and that without them we should wander through a dull desert as dusty as the grave. Take but a single drop of rain, cloistered in the green fold of a blade of grass, and pour upon it one ray of the morning sun—where will you get lapidary with his utmost skill to cut a diamond that shall shine like that? Oh no! blessed for ever be the beautiful drops of the sky, the refreshing soothers of the seared earth—the nourishers of the flowers—that calm race of beings which are all loveliness and tranquillity, without passion, or pain, or desire, or disappointment—whose life is beauty, and whose breath is perfume."

I would have fain heard more; for to me there was a freshness in the character of the Benedictine that was well worthy of more deep remark; but, unhappily, Monsieur de Vitray did not share the same feelings, and with the one eternal current of thought which had so channelled his mind that I defy the strength and perseverance of Hercules to have turned the stream, he once more bore away the conversation to France. The monk showed no signs of annoyance, whatever he felt; but rose and retired to his chamber, leaving me to an excellent bottle of Burgundy, a more substantial supper than he had made himself, and the eternal chiming in of Monsieur de Vitray's laud of France; which, with reverence be it spoken, was worse than a Greek chorus,

CHAPTER IV.

THE room in which I was to pass the night was a large old-fashioned chamber, the tapestry on which represented the triumphant return of David, after his first achievement in the death of Goliath. The future king of Israel was represented as a fat and empty-faced boy, who, dancing away with most obstreperous merriment,—with one leg raised so high that the knee almost kicked his chin; and the other, though less bent, not a little contorted,—dragged along with him a giant's head as big as himself, sadly disfigured by a lurid spot in the middle of the forehead. After the little conqueror came three pair of trumpeters, blowing their worsted cheeks till it seemed as if they would have burst the hangings; and then followed an immense train of armed men, on whose faces I bestowed near half an hour's examination. Through slits, made on purpose in the tapestry, projected on each side of the room a long bracket of iron gilt, which held forth a large mirror; and in the dim light afforded by the candles with which the chamber was furnished, I saw in these looking-glasses, whichever way I moved, four indistinct figures moving about also, in various points of view. The sight annoyed me; and as, notwithstanding my day's fatigue, I did not feel inclined to sleep, I bade little Ball-o'-fire, who had been well taken care of by the servants, cast my cloak over one of the mirrors, and something else over another; and then go to bed and sleep, in a bed closet that opened out of the antechamber.

The lackey whose place it was to attend that apartment had piled me up a sufficient number of logs of wood to have burned a hecatomb, had I desired it; and loading the fire with nearly half a beech-tree, I sat

down in a large chair before it, and watched the flaming and hissing of the newly ignited wood, while my busy thoughts wandered far into futurity.

I thought of Emily Langleigh, and the joy she would feel at my return; and the delight of journeying with her to Paris. And then I contemplated obtaining from my brother the renunciation which alone was required to our union; and hope and imagination combined to picture many a bright scene of happiness to come. There were difficulties, I knew, but difficulties were made to be conquered; and in revolving all that might occur, and laying out many a fanciful means of encountering fancied inconveniences, I passed near an hour in that sort of dreamy pensiveness which can hardly be called thought, it is so broken and unconnected. Gradually, as I went on, the ideas became more and more indistinct; I felt a heavy weight above my eyes; and in short I fell asleep. My thoughts, however, were not totally overpowered by the dull god, though they suffered a strange metamorphosis under his influence.

I seemed to be walking with my beloved Emily on the banks of the Rance, and talking with her on all that was happy. I could hear the tones of her sweet thrilling voice, and see the sparkling of her bright pure eyes, as if it were all reality. It seemed as if my mind was an actor, playing our two characters alternately, for in my dream, it was strange how completely she spoke as Emily Langleigh, and how completely I answered as Harry Masterton; but soon the vision became more confused; the looking-glasses were remembered; and whatever way we turned, there were four figures to be seen at an equal distance from us, imitating all our actions. Then came King David and his trumpeters; and suddenly he cast down the head of Goliath between Emily and myself. Without thinking, I gave it a tremendous kick, when suddenly the enormous head of the giant began rolling with fearful rapidity. The trumpeters and the armed crowd that followed divided into two distinct bands. One gave

the head a kick, and another a kick; and as complete a game of football commenced as ever was played on a village-green upon May-day. At length, as it flew between the two parties with increasing speed, and I could hear the iron with which the players appeared to be covered rattling in the scuffle, one ill-visaged fellow, with a black beard and a very tapestry sort of face, gave it a kick which sent it over towards Emily and myself. The bloody head, still retaining, notwithstanding all the blows it had received, exactly the same appearance it had in the hangings, was just about to fall upon Emily's bosom, when suddenly interposing, I received the blow upon my shoulder, with such force that I started up awake, and turned round towards the side where the game had been going on. It was towards one of the mirrors that I found myself looking, when my apprehension was fully returned, and I at once saw that my cloak had fallen off it, and might have occasioned some noise; but at the same time I perceived the reflection of another figure standing by me on the other side. Turning sharply round, I beheld the Benedictine monk, and found that his laying his hand suddenly upon my arm had probably caused the sensation of something striking me.

"Thy dreams are troubled, my son," he said, when he saw that I was fully awake. Thy limbs but now were moved; and thy lips opening, as if the struggles of thy soul shook thy whole frame, though every fibre was chained in the heavy bonds of sleep. It must have been an evil dream."

"Far more absurd than fearful, good father," I replied. "But may I ask what it is gives me the pleasure of your company at this hour of night?"

"You do not remember me, then?" he said; "but how should you? It is not natural you should—and 'tis better as it is. Would I could as readily forget myself. But who is that?" he demanded, turning towards the door, on which his glance immediately directed my eyes. The figure of my little page gliding in, awakened by the voice of a stranger, was

that which had called the monk's attention; and bidding the boy return to his bed and close the door, I remarked to the good father that it was wonderful he had not wakened him as he passed through the antechamber.

"I entered by the other door behind the tapestry," he replied. "But to speak of why I came, which imports more than the manner, tell me (for you too are changed since last I beheld you), tell me, are you not Henry, the second son of the Lord Masterton."

I replied that I was; and at the same time I let my eye fix upon the face of the monk, of which I had certainly some, though a very vague, recollection. But although I suffered memory to glide over the chain of events gone by, down to my very infancy, I could find no link with which my remembrance of the Benedictine connected itself. I first thought it was one person, and then another, of the few who had frequented Masterton House during my youth; but it was evident that a great change must have taken place in his countenance since I had seen him. I endeavoured then to fix the period within which he must have beheld me, by calculating how far back my appearance resembled that which I at present bore to such an extent as to enable an ordinary degree of acuteness to retrace in the young man the features of the lad or the boy; and I determined in my own mind, that more than six years could not have elapsed—though the shaving off my beard and mustachios, which I have mentioned doing at Calais, had given me back my more youthful look, and made me much more like what I was some two or three years before than I had lately appeared.

While such considerations were passing in my mind with the rapid and lightning-like progress of thought, the monk had remained silent for a moment also, gazing at the embers of the fire, and apparently contemplating the past likewise. He raised his eyes, however, a moment after, demanding—

"And where is your father, young gentleman, that I meet you here, travelling almost alone, in a strange

country, and in a guise certainly not exactly suited to your rank?"

"My father," I replied, "is no more; but excuse me if I remind you, good father, that you are asking questions somewhat freely of one who has but a night's acquaintance with you, as far as he knows, and that too in times when every man has much that he may be willing to keep to himself, till he knows the right of any one who interrogates him."

The monk's brow darkened for a moment, but it cleared again, and he replied,—

"You are right, young gentleman—you are right: I have no title to ask you any questions, but that acknowledged by common courtesy,—and yet you will perhaps indulge me somewhat further than common courtesy commands, when you know that I feel a deep and personal interest in many of your transactions. There is much that I wish to know; and yet, as I have concealments myself, I feel that I am questioning without any right, even such as willingness to reciprocate confidence can give. Tell me, then, will you satisfy me? Will you grant me the explanations which I came here to seek?"

"In the scenes through which I have lately passed," I replied, "I have learned more caution—suspicion call it, if you will, good father—than ever I thought to acquire; and I must hear the nature of the information you require before I promise to give it."

"Well, well," said the monk, "I think I can so frame my questions that you may find it not difficult to answer them. Let me see,"—and he paused for a moment, while I fancied I could see him draw, as it were, a vail of art over his mind, which seemed to dim and obscure every expression of feeling in his countenance: whether it was a sort of habitual and prejudiced suspicion of the Roman clergy, or not, I do not know, which produced that impression on my mind. Certain it is, however, that with no rational cause for such an estimation of any class of my fellow-men—without personal experience (for I had never met with

twenty papists in my life), and merely from the vague connexion of historical facts with very doubtful anecdotes, I was accustomed to look upon the Roman Catholic priesthood as the most artful and cunning body of men that ever this world in which we live had produced. Thus I fancied I saw all the strong feelings and mighty passions of which that monk's heart seemed the receptacle disappearing from his countenance, as he judged it necessary to dissimulate—like the phantoms from some of those magic mirrors which we read of in old tales, and which showed for a moment a moving and animated scene, that faded gradually away into misty and uncertain shadows. "I would not hurt your feelings," he continued; "but pray, if the matter be not too painful, tell me how your father died? When last I heard of him, he was in high health, and his old age itself promised to be green."

"It did so," I answered; "but it was not the failing of his corporeal frame by either age or sickness which caused his death. He fell by a chance shot in an affray which took place between a body of the parliamentary troops sent down to Masterton House, and a party of Cavaliers assembled to witness my brother's wedding."

"Then your brother *is* married!" the monk exclaimed, seizing my hand, and fixing on me a glance full of eagerness. "Then the Lady Emily Langleigh is his wife!"

"Not so," I answered, though unable to conceive in the least how my brother's marriage could so much affect my present companion. "Not so: he is still unmarried. The ceremony was broken off by the arrival of the parliamentary soldiers, commanded by an officer of the name of Dixon."

"Fury!" exclaimed the Benedictine, starting from his seat, and stamping his foot on the ground with all the wild intemperance of actual insanity—"fury, fury!" —And he took two or three strides up and down the chamber, with his eyes glaring, and his teeth clenched, as if unable by the strongest effort to master the passion with which he struggled. At length he paused,

and, coming near me, he added, while he wiped the drops from his brow, "Your father promised solemnly that he should wed her: why did he not force on the marriage? How came he to die with his promise unfulfilled?"

"Calm yourself, my good father," I said, astonished at the dreadful agitation which I beheld, and which, in the range of calculation, I had not the slightest means of accounting for, "calm yourself, and you will see that your question savours a little of an agitated mind."

"Savours of madness, sir!" he exclaimed. "Answer my question: but no—I will be calm. Why did not your father, after your return to Devonshire, hasten your brother's marriage with the Lady Emily? Was there any reason?"

"He did hasten it, sir," I answered, "as much as I suppose he thought decent and proper. I have already told you the ceremony was interrupted in the midst by the arrival of the troops who arrested my brother."

"Then he stood with her at the altar?" demanded the monk. "He was about to unite his fate with hers—but was it willingly, sir? Did he act by no compulsion? Did he go to the altar with his heart hers?"

"I cannot answer your question," I was replying, when he went on himself with increasing vehemence—"Or was he part in his own arrest? Walter Dixon!—yet how could that be? Yes, yes, I see it all: it was a scheme—a base scheme. Villains!" and he shook his clenched hand in the air, as if he menaced some one the object of his thoughts. Then again, casting himself on a seat, he paused, meditating for several minutes—rose again—paced the room, but with a different aspect; and as he returned to where I sat, said in a low and mournful voice, "I have abjured the world—cast from me such thoughts—endeavoured to forget—and yet I must, I must be satisfied. You have seen me much agitated, Captain Masterton," he proceeded; "but you have kindly borne with my weakness, and satisfied my curiosity in some points. When I can make up my mind to give you my confi-

dence, which some day I will do—for I feel sure that our commune will not, cannot end here—you will see that I have not been agitated without cause. In the mean time, can you tell me where your brother is?"

"I do not precisely know," I replied; "I have returned but now from seeking him in London, whither he had been carried after his arrest; but I find that he has made his escape from imprisonment, and has quitted the country; but I know not whither he went."

"Did he quit the country alone?" demanded the monk, earnestly. "Did he quit the country alone?"

"I cannot say," I answered, not thinking myself justified, circumstanced as I was, to hint either my suspicion that Frank had betaken himself to Paris, or my conviction that he had a companion in his flight.

"You cannot say! I believe you are deceiving me," replied the Benedictine, "and I could ask you such questions, young man, that the answers would burn upon your cheeks, if you refused them utterance with your lips. But I will not."

"I think I should know how to treat any man who dared to ask me such questions," I replied; "I am happy therefore, sir, that you think fit to abstain."

"Nay, nay, young gentleman," said the other, in a calmer tone; "I have spoken this night more angrily than I ought—God forgive me!—more angrily, more sinfully than my calling or my faith should have permitted. I have no right—I know I have no right; and yet let me ask one question more. Know ye where Walter Dixon may be found? for to him, all villain as he is, must I apply for further tidings."

In regard to Walter Dixon, no such scruples affected me as had prevented me from being more explicit in regard to my brother; and I replied at once, not perceiving the conclusion at which he would arrive, that he was probably in Paris; as thither he had purposed to direct his steps, when I had passed the channel in the same boat with him from England.

"In Paris!" said the monk. "In Paris! It is strange! Then probably your brother is there too,

for he will not lose sight of him easily. But tell me: have I been deceived? or is it true, that when you marched with a regiment raised by yourselves from Devonshire to Kent, at Amesbury you were met by Walter Dixon, who conducted you to a village called Penford-bourne, and there left you? and was it not he that advised your stay, till you heard further from your party?"

To find in a stranger such a minute knowledge of what had passed on our march, it may be easily supposed astonished me not a little. I replied, however, that his statement was correct; and he proceeded—

"Did he not, after counselling your halt there, furnish you with—But, no, no, no!" he added, with a quivering lip and an agitated voice—"No, no! I can ask no further, in the tone that now becomes me;" and he again paced the room with quick and irregular steps, muttering to himself, "I had hoped that this had all passed by; but the fit comes upon me again. Yet I will be calm."

After a few minutes, spent in an evident struggle to tranquillize feelings that had mastered judgment and even habitual control, the Benedictine resumed his seat, and inquired in a more easy tone whither I now proposed to turn my steps.

"I am now," I replied, willing to see whether he would open himself more in regard to my dear Emily, in whom he seemed to take so deep and strange an interest; and fearless of betraying her into any danger, when I was near to protect her—"I am now about to rejoin the Lady Emily Langleigh and her cousin Lady Margaret, who wait my return in Brittany; but our after-movements must be determined by circumstances."

"Then the Lady Emily," he demanded, "is really in Brittany, as we heard?"

"She is so!" I replied. "Yet I cannot conceive who could have given you the information; for I should imagine her situation and name were of too little interest in this part of the world to be the subject of even occasional gossip."

"It matters not how the tidings spread," he answered. "Suffice it that they are true; and right happy am I to hear them confirmed by your lips. Nevertheless, as you seem in some sort her guardian for the time, till your brother can be found, have a care of her in France. It is a light and idle country in some things, where men think that the vain folly which they emptily fancy to be love is a homage which every woman expects at their hands, and you must guard her for your brother."

"There might be matter of serious offence in that speech," I replied, avoiding the subject, "were it repeated in the ears of good Monsieur de Vitray."

"Not so," replied the monk; "we have been acquainted with each other from youth; and he knows that I am not one to flatter even his weakness. He is an excellent man; but in the brain of every human being there is one tender point—touch which, and he is insane. Happy the man whose madness falls upon some prejudice common to a number of his fellow-creatures. Monsieur de Vitray is a living caricature of the whole French nation, who have undoubtedly many excellent qualities peculiarly their own, and have among them a full and fair proportion of those admirable beings of all classes who, in heart or in talent, in wit or in understanding, rise above the general level of humanity. They have, however, their share of foibles too; and among those foibles, that which in Monsieur de Vitray has deviated into madness is not the least. But still, as every nation must have its weakness, I do not know that, if the choice were left to ourselves, we could fix upon one that would do less evil, and more good, than national vanity."

"I do not then speak with a Frenchman," I replied; "and, indeed, from all that has passed this night, I cannot but conclude that in you I see a countryman of my own."

"A monk has no country," he answered, with a melancholy smile. "When we abjure all worldly things, we abjure that among the rest; but yet the relaxation of our rigorous rules extends to that too;

and as I, who ought to walk on foot, and never quit my convent or its garden but on some religious or charitable purpose, now keep an ambling mule to travel through the country, I believe there will be no great sin in owning that I am by birth an Englishman, though the greater part of my life I have passed in France or Italy."

I was glad to find the conversation now turned to more general subjects; on which the monk spoke with calmness, and wherein I could bear a part with freedom; but he did not indulge in it long; and, rising almost immediately, he excused himself for having intruded into my chamber, and broken in upon my hours of repose. "You may see," he added, "that I had deep and painful motives for infringing common rules. However, something tells me that we shall yet see much more of each other. I think you will soon find it necessary, or convenient, to bend your steps towards Paris. I go there also; and if at the Benedictine house in the quartier St. Jacques you will ask for Dom André, you will find one who will rejoice to see you. Good night! and pleasanter dreams than that which I interrupted."

Thus saying, he left me, and retired by a door behind the tapestry, which led out, like the one through the ante-chamber, to the principal corridor of the château.

He left me—notwithstanding all that had passed, or rather in consequence of all that had passed—both pleased and interested. I had seen deep feelings struggling in the bosom of a human creature, and gaining even the temporary mastery of a fine and high-toned mind: but I had seen them nobly combated and finally subdued. I had now beheld him calm, and I had beheld him agitated; but in every state there was a flashing forth of a bright and commanding spirit, whose powers were rather restrained than exerted. In his demeanour there was much dignity, with perhaps a touch of pride; but the whole was softened and harmonized by the expression of sorrows and anxieties common to

the lowliest of intelligent beings, and by pleasures and enjoyments derived from the simplest and purest objects in the world around us.

I felt that he was a man who might exercise a great, perhaps a dangerous command over my mind; and I saw that with strong passions—passions which had in them a touch of almost phrensied energy—there was a power of concealing, if not of governing them, which, though only exerted for a moment, was evidently the offspring of ancient habits. Who was he? was the question naturally before me; but the more I revolved it in my mind, the farther I seemed from its solution. From his anxiety for Emily, I almost believed him a relation; and yet I had never heard of any others that she had still living but the Lady Margaret. That excellent woman and her husband stood, during his life, in the same relationship to Emily and to each other; but Sir Thomas Langleigh had been long dead. I next strove to confirm the supposition of the monk's connexion with her by blood, by recalling his features and hers, and seeking for a resemblance. There was none on earth to be found; and wearied and at fault, I cast off my clothes, and laid myself down to rest.

CHAPTER V.

I rose early in the morning with the intention of proceeding as speedily as possible. The storm of the preceding evening had passed away, the wind had fallen, the rain had ceased; and the sun was looking out brightly over a world glistening with the drops of the past night. To my imagination, as I had ridden along the dark and weary road which had led me thither, the château of good Monsieur de Vitray had appeared seated in the midst of gloomy wilds, and black and sombre forests; and I could scarcely believe my eyes

when I found it surrounded by a rich and smiling country, covered with fields already bearing promise of the next year's harvest, and young plantations of beautiful wood, glowing with all the bright varieties of autumn.

I found the worthy proprietor robed in a flowered silk dressing-gown (for I had appropriated his velvet one), and busily engaged in the cultivation of his garden, which boasted, even at that season, in its various trim and regular parterres, a great number of beautiful flowers.

"My dear young gentleman," he cried, after the first salutation of the morning was over, "I was just now examining these flowers, after last night's tempest; and really, every time I come into my garden, my wonder, my admiration, and my thankfulness are excited towards God, for his infinite goodness to this my native country. Gracious Heaven! should we not have had full reason to be contented, if when the Creator destined France to be the garden of fine wits and noble hearts—the flower-bed of generous spirits and scientific minds—if he had even denied to our soil and climate what he bestowed upon our understanding, and had left us in a poor and arid country, with only half the natural productions that he gave to other lands! But now, now, my young friend, what ought to be our gratitude, when, not only as a race of men we produce those who far excel all the heroes and demigods of antiquity in courage and warlike skill—who render the names of Pyrrhus and Hannibal, Scipio, Cæsar, Camillus, and Cocles, forgotten; and those also who might well dare the forum or the academic grove to bring forward aught comparable in eloquence or philosophy—what ought to be our gratitude to Heaven, I say, when not only our country produces such a race as this, but when it is gifted with a soil and a climate that excel those of any other land?"

There are some speeches to which it is very difficult to reply, and those of good Monsieur de Vitray were generally of that class. Happily, however, he required very little answer; and, quite satisfied with his

own reasonings upon the subject, he did not desire to hear those of any one else. The gaping admiration of two gardeners who followed him nevertheless seemed to afford him both pleasure and encouragement; for I remarked, that though his speech was addressed to me, he so contrived to turn himself that not a word of it was lost by those on whom he doubtless believed it would have more instructive effect. Happily, a little cough that he had caught gave occasional intervals; and after he had gone on some way further than I have thought necessary to record, and had told me that he was busily writing a book to be called "Les Delices de la France,"* I obtained an opportunity, thanks to a fit of coughing, to tell him of my intention of proceeding immediately.

He would not hear, however of my going before breakfast; and in turning back to the house, we were met by the Benedictine, who saluted me with kindness and courtesy, but took no notice of our interview during the night. He was grave and thoughtful, but his appearance exhibited no traces of the agitation which he had displayed; and as I looked back to what had passed at our last meeting, I could hardly believe it to be aught but a dream.

After breakfast, when I rose to take my departure, Monsieur de Vitray declared he would accompany me a few leagues on the way; and the Benedictine also ordered his mule to be brought, with the purpose of joining our party. It was a spirited animal, and nearly as beautiful and swift as a horse; and I could not but remark that the monk rode with much more of a military than an ecclesiastical air. Our conversation was of indifferent subjects, as far as Monsieur de Vitray would suffer them to be so; but I thought I perceived that when the lead was in the Benedictine's hands, if I may so express myself, he endeavoured as much as was in his power to gather more information on the

* A copy of this book, which is now very scarce, is in possession of the transcriber of these pages, for the gift of which he begs to return his thanks to the donor.

subject of his former inquiries, without however appearing to do so.

Of course Monsieur de Vitray kept his ground; but the monk often contrived to turn the topic started by his friend in another direction, and skilfully brought it round to the matters which occupied his own mind.

"Egypt, Greece, and Italy, my young friend," said Monsieur de Vitray, with an air of kind instruction, "each pretended in turn to be the mother of the sciences and the dwelling-place of the muses; but you may still easily see that none of these climates was destined to be ultimately the abode of the arts, for each lost them in turn; and gradually they fixed their abode in France, which now, when Helicon and Parnassus are forgotten, shows herself clearly the school of sciences, the mountain of the muses, and the asylum of the arts."

"All this," said the Benedictine, "I should scarcely suppose our young friend had yet had time to examine. Pray how long is it since you first arrived in France?"

"Not quite a month," I replied, "and a part of that time I have spent in again returning to England, so that very little of my time has been given to observation of the country in which I now am."

Monsieur de Vitray was about to join in; but the Benedictine stopped him by a question which excited all his attention. "Though you have been such a short time in France," he said, "pray inform us which of the two countries you as yet like best."

The question was difficult to answer with *bienséance;* but the monk almost instantly relieved me, by adding, "Yet first tell us what part of England, as far as you have seen, you prefer, in order that we may judge of your taste."

He spoke with a smile, as if amused at parrying Monsieur de Vitray's harangues; and I replied, "I have been so little out of Devonshire that I can hardly judge of the rest of England any more than I can judge of France; yet from all that I have seen, I should say that I prefer my native county."

"Association—all association, my dear sir," replied the monk. "That is your place of memories, Devonshire; there for you are stored up all the sweet recollections of youth; and, depend upon it, wherever you go—whether your life be a dream of fortunate enjoyment, like that of some men who have their good things here—or whether your journey through existence be laid amid a long desert of disappointments and regrets, like mine—to that place shall turn your eyes with a lingering love, that nothing can remove; if your path be among bright things, you shall still think of that land as the sweetest spot in Tempe; and if you find the world a wilderness, there the oasis of your imagination shall be laid."

"Nevertheless," said Monsieur de Vitray, "any one who uses his reason must find such a combination of charms and perfections—such an accumulation of beauties and excellences—so much to admire, and so much to love in France, that he cannot but allow, that though there may be many spots that are extremely beautiful—though there are many that are extremely delightful, the palm must be given to France."

"But this young gentleman has not yet had an opportunity of judging all its qualities," replied the monk; "and indeed I will not have you, my son, forestall the enjoyment of discovering them for himself, especially as he will most likely proceed to Paris, where, as you acknowledge yourself, the cream—the excellence of all the enjoyments even of France is to be found. I think you propose going thither?" he added, as a question to me.

"Such indeed is my intention," I replied. "But so many things may occur to alter that determination, that I dare scarcely count upon it myself with any feeling of certainty."

"I shall count upon it, however," replied the monk; "for I shall hope to have the pleasure of meeting you in that city, my son. Will you not promise me a visit at my cell? In good sooth, some society, different from the dull routine of monastic life, is necessary to relieve the literary labours of us poor Benedictines.

I willingly promised to visit the monk, if I ever proceeded as far as Paris; and indeed he had contrived to interest me so highly, to ally himself to so many of my thoughts and feelings, in the short time we had been acquainted, that the prospect of seeing him again was like the taking up of some book of great power, where at every page we expect to find something new and striking, and relative to ourselves as human beings.

I believe, too, that to create great interest in the bosom of any of our fellow-creatures, it is necessary strongly to excite the imagination; it little matters by what means. This the Benedictine had done in regard to myself, more than any man I had ever met. The knowledge he had of myself and my family, the deep and extraordinary feelings by which he seemed affected towards us, and my utter ignorance of him and all his affairs, stimulated me to know more; and at once excited and baffled my curiosity. At the same time his strong and original mind—the powerful and uncontrollable working of his heart, and the cares and sorrows to which he occasionally alluded, with the strong traces that every moment appeared of fine and noble sentiments, engaged my better feelings in his behalf, and gave me an inclination to love as well as to admire him.

He reined in his mule as he spoke the last words I have mentioned; and after receiving my promise to visit him in Paris, he prayed for every happiness on my way; and giving me his benediction, left me to pursue my path with Monsieur de Vitray, who proposed to accompany me another league.

When the monk was gone, I endeavoured to gain some information concerning him from my companion; but, whether intentionally or merely in the common course of his mental dreams I do not know, Monsieur de Vitray sheltered himself from all questions under the glories of France. He did speak for a moment, it is true, upon the subject of his friend, but he darted off again almost immediately. He had known great sorrows, he said; and had sought relief from painful reflection

in devoting himself to religion. He had first become a member of the society of Jesus; but finding that the more worldly avocations which the regulations of the Jesuits not only permitted but required, necessarily involved him in transactions and scenes which recalled all that was painful in the world he sought to quit, he had embraced the rule of St. Benedict in its mildest form, and had already in the seclusion of the cloister, and the pursuits of literary acquirement, gained far more tranquillity than he had known for several years before. "Nevertheless," continued Monsieur de Vitray, "as you see, all the seductive charms which adorn the land he has chosen for his place of residence induce him to quit from time to time the shadow of his monastery, the superior of which is a kind and liberal man, and does all that he consistently can to render devotion sweet. Dom André, indeed, does not acknowledge that the beauty that he sees around him, and the excellence that is exposed to his eye in every direction, are the sole motives that lead him forth again into the world. He says that it is a wandering disposition—a mind shaken and injured by the sorrows he has encountered. Nay more, he sometimes sportively denies to France all the merit which she possesses; but he does it but to oppose me, for a moment; for can there be on earth a man so utterly blind as not to perceive that France is the paradise of earthly delights—the theatre of honour and glory—the school of arts and sciences—the land of men of genius and learning—the native place of abundance and beauty—and the temple of fame and immortality?"

I could certainly have furnished him with an instance of a man so blind; but I refrained from opposing a doctrine in which good Monsieur de Vitray was so bigoted a devotee; and he remained irrevocably plunged in France, till we reached the point where he was to leave me. There we parted with many thanks on my side for his hospitality and kindness; and on his many expressions of affection and regard. He made his horse caracol and curvette in the true style

of the manège, as he took leave; and I, with a beast whose graces were all untaught, if he had any, pursued my way towards Dinan.

I had now, had I desired it, a subject of contemplation in regard to the monk, wherewith to diversify the somewhat engrossing thoughts of my approaching meeting with Emily. I required no other ideas, however, than those, and indeed the Benedictine would speedily have been forgotten, had there not been a continual link of connexion between all that had passed in our private conversation and the image of the dear girl towards whom I was so eagerly bending my steps. His inquiries had related to her—in her marriage with my brother he had taken evidently a deep and extraordinary interest—and my imagination conjured up a thousand vague and unreal ways of accounting for that interest and those inquiries, none of which proved true eventually, though some of them, and those the very wildest, came in a degree near truth.

I rejected them all, however, one by one; and I looked forward with no small eagerness to the explanation which I doubted not Emily herself could give me. I knew of no relation she had in France, it was true. I had never heard of any such person as the Benedictine: but then I remembered how little I had heard of Lady Margaret before I had seen her, though I had found since that she had kept up a constant correspondence with my father, on the subject of our dear Emily, and a broken one with Emily herself. The same might have happened in another instance—I might even have seen the Benedictine in former days; and certainly his face haunted my memory, as some indistinct countenance that we see in a dream, the likeness of some one we know well, and yet not precisely the same. Emily, however, I doubted not, could and would explain all; and onward I hastened, as fast as I could go, towards the place of her dwelling.

I must now speak of my constant companion, little Ball-o'-fire, who had ridden on beside me with more than his usual taciturnity. Fancying that the boy was

what is commonly called sulky, on account of the sharp manner I had sent him back to his bed on the preceding night, while the Benedictine was speaking with me, I tried in the first instance to win him by gentleness from his silent mood; but finding that he still answered in monosyllables, I took upon me to lecture him for his supposed moodiness.

"It is not that—it is not that," replied the page; "but the man puzzles me, and I do not love to be puzzled."

"What man?" I demanded. "Of whom are you speaking?"

"The man with the shaved head and the long black gown," he answered. "I have seen him before somewhere, as sure as I live; and I never yet saw the face that I could not remember, till I saw his. I should like to see him with a Geneva scull-cap. He is mighty like some Presbyterian chaplain. Is he an Englishman?"

I answered in the affirmative; and asked the boy if he could not by any collateral circumstance call to mind where he had seen him.

"Then you do not know who he is either?" rejoined the lad sharply. "If he be an Englishman, why did he never speak English? He wants to conceal himself; but if I had been in the house another day, I would have found him out."

"But how?" I demanded; "have you any clew? Do you suspect any one?"

"No!" replied the boy. "No; I do not exactly suspect. But did you never, when you wanted to remember some place or some thing, or some object—did you never find the name floating about in some dark corner of your brain, and to be dragged to light by no means, though you knew it as well as that which your godfathers insist on your carrying to your grave whether you will or not? When you have sat over a bowl of well-spiced mum, did you never see a bit of cinnamon floating upon the top, and try to skim it off with the ladle, while every time you thought you had it sure, it whirled away to another part of the dish, and left you with but a ladleful of liquid? Well, so does the

memory of that man's face serve me when I want to catch it firmly. There it is before me swimming about upon the past as clear as the sun, till I strive to get hold of it and see what it is exactly, but then it whirls away, and leaves me as wise as I was before."

I had seldom, if ever, heard my little companion spend so many words on any subject; and as he showed an evident inclination afterward to meditate over the matter of his doubts in silence, I could not do less than humour his disposition so far as letting him hold his peace. Thus we proceeded without further communication during the greater part of the day; and towards eight o'clock at night reached the foot of the high hill on which Dinan stands. It being my intention to take up my abode for the time in the higher part of the town, I directed my horse's steps up the steep road that winds along under the walls; and although the gates were shut, by using the infallible means which opens all doors, I procured admittance, and proceeded to the chief inn of the place.

As it was somewhat beyond convent hours, and I had no wish to scandalize the good abbess, or rather, I believe, prioress of the convent where Emily boarded, I was fain to remain at the auberge all night; and some of the sweetest, yet most sleepless, hours that I can remember did I pass. My journey was over; I was again near the being whom I loved more than any thing else on earth—the dangers were gone—the difficulties overcome; and hope and joy were all that was before me. Imagination did her fairy work most splendidly, as in the calm silent hours of the night I lay and fancied all the delight of the morrow's meeting. I imagined every look—I called up every feature—I saw the bright light shining from those beautiful eyes, that always seemed to me to overflow with soul. I heard the magic words of welcome spoken in the thrilling tones of joy; and sleep—dull, heavy, death-like sleep could have nothing to do with such living hopes as these.

It was in vain I tried to close my eyes; and yet,

after having given two or three hours to such blessed meditations, I tried hard to banish thought, even though it should be replete with the anticipation of pleasure, and to give myself up to slumber.

In the midst I caught the sound of a deep heavy bell, swinging slowly through the silent air; and distant noises convinced me that something unusual was taking place in the town. In a moment afterward, I heard a number of quick steps running under my window, and the cry, "*Au feu! au feu!*" instantly showed me that some accidental fire was the occasion of the alarm. Hurrying on my clothes, I ran to the street with that curious sort of presentiment of evil which often breaks in upon our happiest dreams. The moment I reached the open air, the glare of the flames rising from the lower town showed me the direction of the burning buildings, and following a multitude of persons who were hastening to render assistance, I ran on, every step bringing me nearer and nearer the convent in which I had left Lady Margaret and Emily. Oh, how my heart beat, and my speed increased, as I came within a few streets of the fire, and saw that it was evidently in the immediate vicinity, if not in the very dwelling, of her I loved. At length I heard one of those who were running like myself ask a man who was standing coolly at the corner of the street, where the fire was.

"C'est chez les Dames Ursulines," replied the man, without moving; but the name of the very convent made me bound forward like lightning; and in a moment after I was before the mass of tottering walls and blazing rafters which had lately surrounded my Emily. There was an immense crowd on every side, standing at a most respectful distance as usual on such occasions, and doing little or no service; while two or three, more vain or more courageous, were approaching nearer, commanding and exhorting the others with all the insolence of hurry and bustle, and doing more harm than good.

I, however, had but one object—I had but one

thought; and without staying to inquire what had become of the inmates of the convent, I burst through the crowd, tumbled over a man who would fain have directed me what to do, and rushed into the midst of the building by the door that led to the parlour. There was nothing around me but falling beams and smoking ruins, and a stifling atmosphere of heat and smoke. My breath was nearly stopped—my hands and face seemed scorched; and as I went reeling and tottering over the piles of burning wood, and slates, and plaster, that blocked up the path, fresh gusts of smoke almost deprived me of my sight also. I made my way on, notwithstanding, through the passages which, arched with stone in most places, had suffered less from the fire than the rest of the building; but when I issued out into the main body of the convent, and looked up, I saw that the roof had fallen in, and that farther search was vain.

Like one mad, I believe, in appearance, and certainly like one mad as far as sensation went, I issued forth from the burning ruins; and as the crowd made way for me to pass, I asked in a few hurried words what had become of the nuns. "They are all safe! they are all safe!" cried two or three voices, with the gladdest sounds that had ever reached my ear. "They are all safe, and at the house of the ladies of St. Benedict farther down the street."

There might still be a doubt, however, and making my way to the convent of the Benedictines, I knocked loudly at the door. The old portress, who answered my summons, seemed little disposed to give me any further information than that all the ladies of the other convent were safe, and taking some repose after their alarm.

"Was she sure?" I asked; "quite sure?"

"Yes, yes!" she answered; "as sure as that St. Benedict is a saint in heaven!"

"And the lady boarders?" I demanded; "are you sure that they also are all safe—none hurt—none missing?"

"Answer him! answer him, Sister Martha!" said a friar, who had come up behind me, and saw the crabbed reluctance of the old dame to be troubled further with my questions. "Answer him. He has some relation among them. I saw him go through the fire just now as if he were mad, looking to see if any had been left."

"Well, well," she said; "I have no objection to tell him, if he would take an answer. They are all safe; I heard the lady prioress go over all their names, professed sisters and novices, and lay sisters and boarders, and there was not one missing or hurt. And now, young man, go home and sleep. That is the best thing you can do."

So saying, she shut the door; and, as far satisfied as I could be, I thanked the friar for his interference, and turned towards my inn, but certainly not to sleep.

CHAPTER VI.

Nothing but the actual sight of Emily Langleigh would have fully convinced me of her safety; and imagination, as if to compensate all the pleasant dreams which she had provided for me during the earlier part of the night, proved herself the most ingenious of tormentors from the time I returned to the auberge till the dawning of the next morning. Even then I felt that some time must still pass before I could with propriety present myself at the convent; and suspense might have endured for an hour longer, had it not been at once changed to more painful apprehensions by my little follower, who crept into my chamber almost as soon as it was light. I had, in truth, quite forgotten the boy in the hurry and agitation of the moment; but he now returned quite out of breath, and alarmed me by the very haste which sparkled in his eyes.

"She is not there!" he said, as he entered. "The Lady Emily is not at the convent."

"Are you sure, boy?" I demanded, almost wild with apprehension. "How do you know?"

"Because I have been there but now," he replied, "and have seen all the nuns and every one else go to matins in the chapel, and she was not among them."

I flew, rather than ran, to the convent of the Benedictine nuns; and hastening in, as I knew that the portress was most likely unacquainted with the names of the new guests in their convent, I asked to speak with the prioress of the Ursulines.

After detaining me for nearly half an hour in a state of suspense and anxiety beyond description, the old lady appeared at the grate, and asked what I wished with her. She evidently did not remember me in my changed garb; but a few words only were requisite to explain to her my business and my anxieties; and replying simply, "No, no, they are quite safe," she told me that if I would go round, she would order me to be admitted to the parlour.

To the parlour I then went, with a load taken off my heart; but to my surprise, I found the superior of the Ursulines with the chief of the Benedictines alone. I seated myself in some surprise, though I evidently saw from the smiling countenance of both the ladies that they could have no very serious calamity to announce. In the first instance, as a matter of course, the prioress gave a few words to their blessed deliverance of the former night, and then went on to tell me, that long before that, the ladies I sought were gone.

"Gone!" I exclaimed, almost starting from my seat. "Gone! and pray, lady, can you inform me where they are gone to?"

"I know no more than yourself, my son," replied the old lady; "but has not sister Bridget, the portress, given you the letter they left for you? Nay, but I forgot that she is not portress here, and therefore you have not seen her. Well, she shall be called."

Sister Bridget was accordingly summoned; and entered with many a lowly reverence to her superiors; but the moment she set eyes upon me, she exclaimed, "Bon St. François! It is the English gentleman; and he will be wanting the letter, and my coffre was burned last night in the fire."

"And the letter was in it?" I asked; "and is burned also? Is it so?"

"Nay, do not look so fierce, monsieur," replied the old woman. "I could not help it. It was no fault of mine. I did not set the place on fire on purpose to burn your letter; not I."

I assured her that I was not fierce, as she called it, though vexed and embarrassed; but she had got the advantage of having something to complain of, and she kept it going on, "You need not frown at me, indeed; I would not have had my own things burned if I could have helped it: there was the silver cross, which had been blessed by our holy father the pope; and the tooth of St. Denis; and my beads from Loretto; and many a thing that I would fain have saved sooner than your letter; letter indeed! no great thing, I warrant; what would it signify if twenty such were burned?"

I thought I should have gone mad; and I do believe that such would have been the consummation if the prioress had not ordered that dreadful old woman to leave the room, which she did, grumbling the whole way, as if she had suffered the misfortune, and not I; "Letter indeed! tooth of St. Denis, worth a thousand of it!" till the door closed behind her.

"The letter is lost, my son," said the prioress; "and as it cannot be recovered from the element which has devoured it, you should not make yourself unhappy on that score. What between our own faults and our own mistakes, if we grieve but for those things which can be amended, we shall have enough to do."

"But, my dear lady," I replied, "you do not seem to understand the full value of that letter; for here in a strange country, with no possible clew to guide me,

how shall I discover those dear connexions who are now separated from me; if, as you say, you can give me no information concerning their present abode?"

"None can I give, my son," replied the superior; "but I think they spoke of Paris. Yet, surely, before you parted, you must have arranged some means of learning each other's movements in that wide horrible place the world. I would not tread it for a month alone, without some one to guide me, to be abbess of Clairvaux."

"When I left them, lady," I replied, "I had not the most distant idea that they would change their dwelling ere my return. I was always sure to find your community somewhere; and I never doubted that I should have found the Lady Margaret and the Lady Emily with you. Can you not favour me by any explanation of the motives which induced them to leave your house before my return from England?"

"What reasons the gentleman gave I cannot tell," replied the prioress. "But certainly he seemed to have a very great influence over them."

"Whom do you mean, lady? What gentleman?" I exclaimed, in unmingled astonishment. "I know of no gentleman who ought to guide their movements but myself."

"They seemed to think differently, my son," replied the prioress, apparently getting tired of the conversation; "for they left my care under his protection: and set out in a carriage, provided for them by him: that is all I can tell you."

Could it be my brother? I asked myself, though the very question was agony. Could it be my brother; and could Emily really have gone away under his guidance? Gracious Heaven! was it possible? "Was he young or old, madam?" I demanded, with as much calmness as I could assume.

"He was neither far advanced in life, nor yet to be called young," replied the superior. "He was probably my own age, or thereabout."

If the first part of the good lady's answer had almost

made me despair, the second, though it left me as much in doubt as ever, took from my mind the sting of jealousy at least; and I proceeded to ask several more questions concerning the stranger; and also in regard to the period at which he had first made his appearance.

"You question somewhat rudely and somewhat long, my son," replied the lady of the Ursulines, giving way to her impatience. "I will now tell you all about it in my own way, and with that you must be satisfied, for I will not submit to be catechised, as if I were before a synod. About a week since, the gentleman I speak of came to the grate and demanded to see the Lady Margaret Langleigh; and she being a boarder, he was conducted to the parlour. After a long conversation alone, the Lady Emily was sent for; and shortly after, having finished the devotions in which I was engaged, I also went into the parlour. I found the younger lady all in tears; but they were evidently not tears of sorrow; and the gentleman, who was a person of great courtesy and elegance, then told me it was his intention to take away the ladies with him the next day, adding, "This diamond, madam, I beg you to accept, for the kindness and attention you have shown them; and though I know the gauds and baubles of this world are forbidden to you, who set your thoughts and wishes upon crowns of glory and imperishable goods: yet let me beg you to employ it as you may judge best."

The good prioress, as she related this circumstance, gave a slight bridling toss of her head, with a glance at the superior of the friendly convent, and then instantly proceeded: "Well, when he was gone, I did ask the Lady Emily, and the Lady Margaret also, who the stranger was; but there seemed to me some mystery, and as I have no curiosity for things of the world, I of course inquired no further. Nor was the portress able to discover, though she asked very carefully; nor could Father Antoine, our holy director, find out who the stranger was; and yet having some business at the inn where the other lodged, he inquired accidentally, if the aubergiste knew him. The next day, at noon, the

stranger came again with a carriage and gray horses, in which he carried away the two ladies, who left a letter for you with the portress. Had they chosen to confide it to me, doubtless it might have been cared for; but they did as they pleased, and that is all I can tell you, young gentleman."

"If you knew, madam, how much I am concerned in all that has passed," I replied, "and what embarrassment and anxiety the loss of this letter causes me, I am sure you would, in Christian charity, give me every information which could lead me to trace the dear friends I have lost."

"Oh, I am willing, quite willing to tell you any thing I know, my son," answered the old lady: but I saw that some offence had been given, probably by the reserve which Emily and Lady Margaret had displayed; and I therefore contented myself with asking if the stranger were an Englishman or a Frenchman.

"Oh, a Frenchman he appeared, certainly," replied the superior. "He was so courteous and polite. Yet he might have a little accent too," she added, "though he spoke French like a native."

As it was evident that I was to expect no further information, I now rose, and taking leave, returned to my inn in a state of mind not easy to conceive. Casting myself down on a seat, I leaned my head upon the table, and endeavoured to collect and arrange my ideas; but for some time my brain remained in such a state of inextricable confusion, between want of sleep, agitation, alarm, and suspense, that no idea remained clear and precise before my mind for a single instant. The boy stood near, and gazed upon me wistfully, as if he would fain have asked the tidings which I had obtained; and at length I gave him, in a quick and hurried manner, a sketch of what I had learned.

"Is that all?" he cried, bounding towards the door with that rapidity of conclusion and action which he had learned in the camp. "Is that all? I thought they were all dead! Oh, we shall soon find them;—a carriage must be a rare thing in a town like this; and

we shall trace it along the road as easily as a slow-hound follows his game." So saying, he darted away. Remembering, however, that he had scarcely an idea of the language of the country but what he had been able to acquire on the road, I hastened after him, and overtook him in the inn-yard. He had already collected round him half a dozen hostlers and grooms and drawers; and, with a piece of chalk, was busily sketching on the wall a very tolerable representation of a carriage and horses; while he tried by sundry words and broken phrases of mixed French and English, to make them comprehend his desire to know where the vehicle he portrayed had gone.

My coming put an end to such elaborate procedure; and following the course the boy had suggested, I demanded whether a gentleman had put up there about six or seven days previously, with a carriage and two gray horses. To an immediate reply in the affirmative, was joined the information, that he had four instead of two gray horses, and was accompanied by two stout fellows on horseback, from which I augured more news still; as how much soever the master might be given to taciturnity, it was more than probable that one or other of his lackeys had been more communicative, and given some account of their journey, or their dwelling, or their designs, which might furnish a clew to their route. In this I was disappointed. Every one remembered the carriage and the horses, and the gentleman and his servants; but every one also remembered that never had such a reserved party entered the gates of the *Cheval blanc*, and all assured me that not one word had passed the lips of any of them concerning their object or intentions, except when on one occasion the younger of the grooms declared that he hoped soon to see Paris again. This, however, was some news, and my next questions tended to ascertain the appearance of the master of these horses and grooms; but on this subject, the servants of the inn referred me to the aubergiste himself, as more eloquent than themselves; and to him I consequently made application.

The gentleman, the aubergiste said, who possessed the coach, was somewhere between fifty and sixty, perhaps dipped in his fifty-fifth year. He was sober in his habit; and wore a coat the colour of vin de Medoc, garnished with silver; he was tall, muscular, and florid in complexion. He was gay and sparkling, too, in manner, the innkeeper further said, larded his conversation now and then with a *bon mot*, or a good story, but never spoke of himself by any chance, and though he ate but sparingly, he drank in reason, and always of the best.

This account left me as wise as I was before; for no one within the sphere of my personal recollection bore the slightest resemblance to the person here described, that is to say, as far as the innkeeper's description differed from that which might have been given of any other individual of the human race. Doubtful, anxious, and perplexed, a choice of difficulties lay before me. Beyond all question, Emily's letter, which had been destroyed, would have given me directions where to find her, and would also have explained the circumstances under which she had left the asylum that I had chosen for her; but, at the same time, she would of course expect me to follow whither she had gone; and might or might not write again to ensure my knowledge of her abode. If I left the town, any letter she sent might again be lost; and if I remained to wait for more news, I might lose all traces of her further journey. Where there is but a choice of evils before an anxious mind, I believe the one which implies inactivity will be always rejected; and I determined at all risks to seek Emily Langleigh in Paris. As far as possible, however, to guard against the risk of missing any communication she might direct to me, I placed two pieces of gold in the aubergiste's hands, telling him to make inquiries every day of the portress of the Ursuline nuns, for any letters which might be there left for me; and in the case of the arrival of any, to forward it to me by a courier, to an inn I had heard my father mention, in the immediate vicinity of the Place

Royale. If I received none, I told him that I should return at the end of two months, and claim my forty-eight livres, but if he forwarded any to me, I bade him keep the money as a reward; and promised to pay the expenses of the messenger. His own interest was thus bound to my side; and forty-eight livres is a sum which a French innkeeper does not despise, nor an English one either.

My next proceeding was to acquire the most complete and accurate knowledge that it was possible to obtain of the carriage, the horses, the liveries. The aubergiste described the coach with the most minute precision; the garçon d'écurie informed me of every spot upon the horses' skins; and the fille de cuisine gave me a particular account of the liveries. The road the whole party had taken, after pausing for half an hour at the Ursuline convent, and being joined by two ladies, was decidedly that which led towards Paris; for which information I was indebted to a deformed idiot, one of the invariable hangers-on of a French inn. He had followed the coach, praying for sous, even after he had obtained several; and the same intense cupidity which had led to his acquiring the information, easily induced him to part with it, though in somewhat garbled form. Thus far prepared for my search—though that was little enough certainly—I mounted my horse with little Ball-o'-fire, and set out from Dinan, bending my steps towards Paris. I had entered that town with all my anticipations as bright as summer daylight. All uncertain as was the future, imagination and hope had revelled over it as if it were a field of flowers. But expectation is almost always false. If she hold us forth a cup overflowing with sweets, Fate stands behind and dashes it from our lips; and if she point to the gathering clouds that hang threatening over our heads, accident raises some kind wind that wafts them far away.

I had entered Dinan full of hope and delight; I quitted it with those hopes all melted into air. How far those hopes were afterward renewed, and how far they

were again dissipated, shall be told hereafter, if Heaven gives me life and leisure to conclude this sketch of my history.

Note Bene.—Here endeth the private history of that honourable gentleman Henry Masterton, as written by his own hand; what followeth being compiled by me, John Woolsanger, A.M., in the year of grace 1675–6, from authentic sources, as shall be shown hereafter.

CHAPTER VII.

The eager blood of youth thrilled through all the veins of Henry Masterton as he urged his horse forward on the road leading towards Paris. Disappointment is to youth but a renewal of hope; and riding on for Fougeres, the idea of losing sight of Emily Langleigh gradually yielded to the expectation of overtaking her, as he spake anxiously with his page on the means to be taken in order to leave no possible chance of mistaking the way she had followed. Such conversation was broken by long though fertile musings on the cause of her departure from Dinan, speculations concerning the person who had apparently influenced her to remove from the asylum in which he had left her, and many a vain effort of memory to find a reason for the occurrences of the present in facts of the past.

At every little auberge on the road, where it seemed likely that such an equipage as that which carried the object of his search would pause, either to water the horses or to refresh the travellers, Henry halted to make inquiries; and of course various were the answers he received from the different aubergistes and their servants. Some gave him prompt and satisfactory information. Some had no memories but for the present day, and the thumb-screw would not have squeezed out

of them any information of things that had passed six days before; and some, though slow and stupid at first, tardily pumped up at length the tidings he wanted from the bottom of their deep-sunk minds. Upon the whole, however, the line of information remained clear as far as Fougeres, to which place Emily had certainly been carried, but in towns where there were several inns the search became more difficult; for Henry found it an invariable rule that one innkeeper never by any chance knew any thing that had happened at the house of another; and if the king and all his court had lodged for a week at the Boule d'Or at Fougeres, the landlord of the Grand St. Martin would have taken care to know nothing about it. The only resource of the young cavalier was to inquire at each whether the equipage he described had put up there, and only to dismount at that where the information was clear. At Fougeres this happened at the Boule d'Or; and there Henry obtained a full and particular description of Emily and Lady Margaret, and the gentleman who accompanied them, who was designated by the aubergiste's wife as *un bel homme*, adding, "La belle tête que sa tête!"

There is a peculiar and curious sort of restiffness in the human mind which makes it on many occasions kick against conviction; and in a thousand instances where our reason tells us to be perfectly sure, a lingering doubt of we know not what will often hang about our mind in despite of judgment, and feeling, and common sense.

Although jealousy of Emily Langleigh was totally out of all question of calm consideration, yet this description of her companion did not give Henry all the pleasure which doubtless the landlady purposed. When the excitement of quick riding, and expectation, and inquiry was over, and he lay in darkness and silence on his bed at Fougeres, melancholy again took possession of him, and he conjured up a thousand vague and shadowy miseries to haunt the time till he could fall asleep. He now fancied one thing, and now another; he imagined many a specious scheme which might

have been used to lure her away; in his own mind he did many a little injustice to Lady Margaret, and even to Emily herself: he was sorry he had ever left her; he was sorry that he had not bound her by a promise not to quit Dinan till his return; and he reproached himself for not providing for all contingencies, without calling to mind that it was impossible to have foreseen them. He remembered too the interest the Benedictine, whom he had met at Monsieur de Vitray's, had taken in her he loved, and the knowledge that he appeared to have of her being in France; and no small regret passed through the mind of the young traveller for not having in the first place sought out the monk, and made him give all the information that he possessed. It was too late now, however, to turn; and as he was to meet him in Paris, he resolved to make his first application to him, if he did not discover Emily herself previously.

Early the next morning both master and page were on horseback, and spurring on for Mayenne, which, as the road then lay, was a tolerable day's journey for a horse. At the last watering-house, however, no tidings of the cavalcade were to be obtained, and in the town itself the young cavalier inquired in vain at every inn which the place afforded. No news of Emily were to be obtained; no such carriage and servants had been seen, and Henry was in despair. His horse was weary, but still the day was not so far advanced but that he might reach Alençon, by borrowing an hour or two from the night; and pausing at Mayenne only to feed the two steeds, he proceeded as fast as possible on his way. Although it was dark, the gates were not yet shut when he reached Alençon, and inquiring of the concierge for the best auberge, he was directed to the *Bras de Fer*. His first inquiry as he alighted in the court was, whether the persons he sought had been there within the last week? and to his no small joy, he found that they had only quitted that very inn two mornings before. They were travelling very slowly, the aubergiste said, and were certainly going to Paris,

so that monsieur, if he were so disposed, might easily overtake them before they reached the capital.

These tidings were happy ones indeed, and well repaid his disappointment at Mayenne. His horse, of course, was his next care, and after having personally attended to the refreshment of his weary beast, he returned to the house, satisfied that it would be able to pursue its journey the next day. When he set out, however, early in the morning, the animal was still stiff with the long journeys of the two preceding days; and though it became fresher as it warmed with exercise, yet before it had gone twenty miles it was again dreadfully tired. Obliged to slacken his pace, the young Cavalier rode slowly on with all the melancholy attending upon a tired horse, while the tormenting steeple of Verneuil, still at ten miles' distance, rose towering above every other object, tall, stiff and monumental, without ever appearing to grow an inch nearer. At length, however, he reached that little town, and had again the satisfaction of finding that he had gained another day upon those whom he sought to overtake. The whole cavalcade had but quitted the place that morning; and as he now ascertained that they travelled little more than fifteen or twenty miles each day, he doubted not that before the following evening he should once more hold Emily to his heart.

Every other feeling but that of joy was now forgotten; and though, to say truth, more than once on his journey, when weary and disappointed he found his inquiries vain and his pursuit baffled, he had mentally reproached Emily for quitting at all, till he returned, the asylum he had provided for her, he now remembered nothing but the glad anticipation of once more beholding her, and consoled himself for all his pains with the bright assurances which expectation so often heaps upon *to-morrow*.

At the end of that strange eventful thing human life, perhaps we may have an opportunity of balancing accounts with the great promise-breaker Hope; and in truth a sad catalogue of disappointments must the

very happiest of men have to lay to her charge. Again Henry Masterton set out from Verneuil with expectations high raised, and a bosom full of bright dreams; but before he reached Dreux, his horse once more showed signs of great fatigue, and as it came down the steep hill, a little beyond Nonancourt, the poor animal stumbled and fell. The rider pulled it up in an instant, but its knees were cut to pieces, and it could do no more than proceed to the town which lay before it.

At Dreux the young Cavalier was tantalized with the news that the carriage for which he inquired had set out from that place not three hours before, but the landlord of the inn would part with none of his horses; and, all impatient as he was, Henry Masterton had but the choice of sending for a horse-dealer, whom the aubergiste recommended as *the most honest man in the world*, or taking the post, which, as it never went above five miles an hour, would of course delay him greatly, in the first instance, though it might facilitate his movements in the end, by enabling him to continue his journey without interruption. As present speed, however, was his great object, he sent immediately for *the most honest man in the world*, who, of course, proved a great rogue; and, seeing that he had to do with one who had no time to spare in bargaining, demanded not only ten times more for his horses than they were worth, but far more than Henry's finances could afford to disburse. The post, therefore, became his only resource, and, proceeding thither, he was instantly furnished with two stout beasts for his boy and himself, and, accompanied by a postillion, set out once more for Paris.

The inducement of a livre or two to the postillion put the horses into a quicker pace, and a little before they reached the town of Montford, they caught sight of a carriage ascending one of the opposite hills. Their journey now became a race, and they soon gained the top of the ascent, over which they had seen the object of their pursuit making its slow way. By this time the carriage was down at the bottom of the declivity on the other side, and, before they had reached the valley

it was again over a lesser hill beyond. When the horsemen arrived at the top of that also, they perceived the vehicle about a quarter of a mile in advance, brought to a halt, while one of the servants arranged some part of the harness which had broken or gone wrong. To the surprise and disappointment of Henry Masterton, however, they could now clearly perceive that the colour of the horses was brown, not gray, and, when he rode up and looked in—still in the hopes that some accident might have caused such a change—he saw that the carriage was only tenanted by a goodly dame of fifty, who filled, and filled compactly, one whole side, while an abigail, of younger date, and slimmer proportions, sat like a single thin book on a spacious book-shelf, the only occupant of the opposite seat. The boots, or *portières*, as they are called in France, and which might each have held two persons more, were vacant.

The Cavalier and his followers had now again recourse to the spur, and many was the straining glance that Henry Masterton cast over the country before him. At each *relais*, and at every inn, he pursued his inquiries more and more eagerly; for apprehensions, by no means unreasonable, began to take possession of his mind, lest now, as he was approaching the capital, amid the numerous vehicles with which the highways were frequented, and the number of cross-roads by which the country was intersected, he might lose all trace of the party which he had thus far followed successfully.

Continual and more circumstantial news of the events which were taking place in the neighbourhood of Paris, than had been known in the distant province from which he came, now reached him also; and he found that the court and army were at St. Germain; while Paris, declared to be in a state of siege, was held out by the parliament and by a party called the Fronde. The country between the two cities, and, in fact, the whole environs of the capital for five or six miles' distance from the walls, were in a complete state of

disorganization, and seemed reserved as a general field for skirmishes and petty contentions, very different from the fierce and sanguinary struggles that had been taking place in England. Brothers, and relatives, and friends, indeed, met each other arrayed in deadly arms, but laughter, and jest, and merriment mingled with the strife, and much more wit than blood was expended in the quarrel. Not that animosities and hatreds were wholly banished; for every now and then a bloody rencounter took place, which proved that both parties did not *always* run away, as sometimes happened; but these more serious encounters were as much a matter of laughter to both the city and the court as the more frivolous engagements. The wounded made epigrams upon themselves, and the survivors satirized their dead companions.

Such news, however, was not calculated to quiet the mind of the lover in regard to the fate of Emily Langleigh, nor did the state of the country which he was now entering at all favour his further search. The tidings that he obtained, indeed, became more and more vague at every step. Some of the persons to whom he addressed his inquiries declared that fifty such carriages as he described had passed that day; others vowed that there had been none. Some pretended to remember such a one, evidently without having remarked it correctly; and others turned away sullenly, and would hardly give any answer to his questions.

The numbers which he now began to meet announced the proximity of the capital, and near each small town he encountered parties of armed horsemen. Carriages, and foot passengers, bourgeois and paysan were seen; not taking their evening pastime after the fatigues of the day were over; but, some hastening here and there with busy countenances, and some laughing and singing with military indifference; though all evidently the subjects of a land ill at ease, in which the sword had usurped an unwonted ascendency over the ploughshare.

From six o'clock in the morning until near four in the afternoon, Henry Masterton had scarcely been out of the saddle for a moment, and, by the time he arrived at the little deserted town of Versailles, both darkness and weariness compelled him to stop. By this time he had lost all trace of Emily Langleigh, and had become almost hopeless of finding her except through such information as he could gain from the Benedictine. To reach Paris, therefore, was his immediate purpose, and alighting at a small cabaret at Versailles, he sent for the landlord to demand what was the state of the city, and what formalities were required to obtain an entrance, as he understood that it was in actual siege.

"Ah! good faith, no great siege goes on, sir," replied the innkeeper, "you may find your way into it as easily as into that *paté*. The Frondeurs pretend to demand a pass, but it is never exacted, and if you like to wait till to-morrow morning, I will send my son with you, who will easily obtain admission. Two gentlemen and their servants dined here this morning, going to Monsieur d'Elbeuf, one of their generals. They set out two hours since, and are in Paris by this time. One of them was a monk, by the way; and they get in and out everywhere."

To have attempted to proceed that night might have proved dangerous in more ways than one, and the young Cavalier took his seat in the kitchen of the inn, and endeavoured to obtain some information in regard to the carriage which he had traced so far. Here, also, he was disappointed, although the aubergiste, with much greater civility than he had generally met with, sent out to inquire particularly at all the houses of public entertainment in the town, whether such an equipage had arrived at any of them, or had been seen to pass through by any one. In return for this kindness, it is true, he required the young traveller to *sit down* at least, to a very splendid supper, for which he had no great inclination, and to drink his best wine, to which he pressed him with somewhat egotistical commendations of the vintage.

Henry easily understood the terms on which his civility was granted, and subscribed to them with a good grace. He even went so far as to buy a horse, for which the landlord, who was a man of honour and conscience, did not ask him above four louis more than the just value, and which matched very well with the steed of little Ball-o'-fire, that, lightened of both its burdens, the boy and the valise, had been led after them from Verneuil to Versailles.

Gloomy and anxious, indeed, were the thoughts of the young wanderer when he retired to his own chamber; but circumstanced as he was, deprived of almost every clew to the discovery of her he loved, an exile from his own country, and an unfriended stranger in a foreign land, his gloom would probably have been greater, had he not been enlivened, in some degree, by the bright tone of daring hope which the mind of his little companion never seemed to lose under any difficulty or danger.

"Nothing is irretrievable but death; nothing is lost but what is at the bottom of the sea," was the boy's favourite axiom. And he spoke so surely of finding the Lady Emily in Paris—the dear, the beautiful Lady Emily, whom he loved so much—that Henry Masterton himself began to take his words for prophecies.

Weariness and exhaustion did the part of a mind at ease, and he slept soundly through the night; nor, probably, would have woke till late the next morning, had not the orders he had given to rouse him at seven been punctually observed. He found his breakfast prepared also; and by the time he had concluded that, his horse was brought saddled to the door, with the son of the landlord ready to pilot him into Paris. After paying his debt, which very nearly brought his gold to a conclusion, he once more sprang into the saddle, and set out for the capital. Following the son of the aubergiste, a boy of thirteen or fourteen, Henry and his page left the immediate high-road, and by a variety of circuitous paths approached that entrance of the great city which the guide deemed safest. From the

edge of one of the hills, they soon caught a view of a sea of spires and buildings, occupying a large space in the beautiful plain, through which the Seine winds onward on its course; and a body of cavalry, manœuvring without the walls, showed that the strife of which those fields was so continually the scene had already begun for the day.

Continuing in the narrow road which they were then pursuing, the party approached nearer and more near to the city, whose naturally feeble defences had been strengthened by some outworks, both towards the river and the plain. It was opposite to one of these that Henry Masterton found himself, when the path opened out upon a piece of fine grass-land, only broken in one place by a copse of low wood, and commanded by a sort of ravelin that had been thrown up before the wall of the town.

"Now," said the lad who led the way, "we must get behind that mound, and then I know the captain of the quarter, who will let us in." Thus saying, he led the way along one face of the ravelin, which appeared to be perfectly without guard or sentry, and began to approach a part where the work was still imperfect. A slight sound, however, from the copse on the left called the attention of the young Cavalier who followed him; and turning round, he saw a file of musketeers draw out from behind, and advance quickly towards the very spot where he stood. He instantly pointed them out to the lad, who, after gazing at them for a moment, without speaking a word, set spurs to his horse and galloped away as fast as his beast would carry him. Henry was about to follow, but as he turned his horse, a long line of heads was raised on the other side of the ravelin, and a glistening row of firelocks appeared levelled against the musketeers, who were coming up at a quick charge.

It was evident enough, even to so young a soldier as Henry Masterton, that his party had arrived at an unfortunate moment, when a body of the Royalists were about to attempt the surprise of one of the Parisian de-

fences, which was generally left unguarded; and that he himself was directly in the line of fire of both parties. The unfinished opening in the ravelin was the nearest means of escape from a struggle in which he had no interest; and towards it he pushed his horse as fast as possible, having not the slightest disposition to mingle in the strife that was about to take place. Before he reached it, however, the advancing corps, finding the outwork unexpectedly occupied by a considerable force, wavered and halted in full career, at about seventy yards from the ravelin. The Parisians instantly availed themselves of their enemy's confusion. A musket at the head of the line was discharged, a rapid blaze of fire ran along the whole face of the ravelin, and with a sensation as if a red-hot iron had been driven into his shoulder, Henry Masterton fell from his horse between the two lines. He instantly started on his feet again and caught his horse by the bridle, but he felt very sick and faint, and in a moment, without knowing why, he sank again to the ground, while little Ball-o'-fire, springing to his side, tied his scarf tightly over his master's shoulder, to stay the effusion of blood from a severe wound. Scarcely had he performed his task, when the Parisians, whose first fire had thrown the attacking party into no small confusion, followed up their advantage by issuing forth from their ravelin, and drove back the assailants in confusion over the plain. This feat was performed while the page still knelt by his master; but at length, seeing the victorious party returning towards their works, the boy started up with his habitual knowledge of battle-fields, exclaiming, "They'll be for plundering the baggage!" and unstrapping the valise, he fled like the wind into the little copse-wood which had covered the approach of the Royalists.

The Frondeurs returned laughing and singing, but their merriment did not argue any true gentleness of nature; and twenty or thirty made for the spot where the young Englishman lay unable to raise himself from the ground. As they advanced, one of them calmly

set his foot on the breast of an unhappy musketeer—who had fallen at the first volley, and who seemed hardly yet dead—exclaiming, as he did so,—

> "Monsieur s'en dort,
> Non, non, il est mort.
> Tan, tan, ta ran tan, ta ra!"

The eyes of the young Cavalier were fixed upon that spot; and faint with loss of blood, the fearful levity which mingled with the brutality of the action he beheld, overcame all the strength he had left. He became as sick as death—the whole world seemed to swim round with him for a moment—a thick mist came over his eyes, and he saw no more.

CHAPTER VIII.

When Henry Masterton once more opened his eyes to the light of day, he found himself in a situation well calculated to make him close them again as soon as possible. He was surrounded by about twenty of the lowest Frondeurs, who seemed absolutely drunk with their success in repelling the attack on the ravelin. One was stirring him rudely with his foot, while another was busily engaged in adjusting a rope to his neck, in such a manner as to leave no doubt of their intention of ending by the cord what life the shot had left him.

"He's awake! he's awake!" shouted a third. "Away with him! away with the spy! Hang all spies up as high as Montfauçon! Away with him!"

"Where shall we hang him?" cried the one who was so busy about the poor youth's throat: "where shall we hang him?"

"To the creneau by the Port St. Antoine!" replied one of the others. "But quick! quick! or we may be stayed."

"Hold! hold! gentlemen," cried the young Cavalier, in a faint voice. "In the name of Heaven, whom do you take me for?"

"For a villanous spy, who would have betrayed us to the enemy," cried a dozen voices at once. "Away with him! away with him!"

"You are wrong! you are mistaken, on my honour! on my soul!" exclaimed the unhappy traveller. "I came but yesterday from Brittany, and was but trying to find the easiest means of entering the city."

"Ay, doubtless! doubtless!" shouted the Frondeurs. "But you wanted to take a whole regiment with you."

"Did we not see you sneak along the ravelin?" cried one.

"Did we not see you lead on the white scarfs?" cried another. "Away with him! away with him!" and drowning his expostulations in shouts, they raised him up from the ground, and while one man held him up in torture by the wounded arm, and another supported him under the other, a third pulled him on by the rope round his neck, and waving their hats with the mad exultation of an excited multitude, they dragged him on towards one of the great gates of the city.

The pain of his wound was intense, and the loss of blood he had suffered great; but yet he fainted not, for there was a dreadful excitement in his situation, which kept him alive to all that was passing round him, though his heart sank, and his brain turned round. Never to see Emily Langleigh more—to die the death of a dog in a strange land, at the very moment he was likely to have overtaken her—to leave her to chance and accident without knowing her fate! Such were some of the thoughts that mingled with the natural abhorrence of death, and the shrinking of an honourable heart from fate reserved for the lowest malefactors.

He suffered them to drag him forward unopposed, for there was a degree of pride in the bosom of the young Cavalier which would not allow him to beg any more for life at the hands of the low villains that were about to assassinate him. "You are condemning your

own souls by staining your hands with the blood of an innocent man," was all he deigned to say to those who forced him onward; to which they only shouted a reply of scorn, and urged him forward towards the Port St. Antoine. There, throwing the rope round a projecting part of the stone-work, one of the Frondeurs climbed up with some difficulty to fix it so as to prevent its slipping, while two or three more placed the unhappy Cavalier under the precise spot, and a number of others prepared to draw the opposite end of the cord.

While these fatal preparations were in progress, a gay and gallant troop of horsemen issued out of the city gate, but took no further notice of what was passing close by them than by asking what the other group was about?

"Only hanging a spy, monseigneur! only hanging a spy!" shouted one of the Frondeurs to the gentleman who had asked the question.

"Let us stop and see the operation," cried the horseman, turning to his companions; "if well and skilfully performed, 'tis a delicate and brilliant piece of work—but, I fear me, these fellows will bungle it. For the honour of France, my good friend," he continued speaking laughingly to a gentleman who rode beside him, "for the honour of France we ought to send for Monsieur le Bourreau, and take it out of the hands of such *maladroits!*"

At that moment the gentleman to whom he spoke felt something pull his riding-coat violently; and looking down, beheld a boy who had mingled unperceived with his company: and who, alternately clasping his hands, and pointing to the scene before them, seemed to implore most piteously his interference.

"Nom de Dieu!" exclaimed the gentleman, in French; "you here, little page! Where is your master? Where is Monsieur Masterton?"

The boy answered nothing, but continued pointing forward eagerly with his hand; and at length seeing that the other did not comprehend, he laid his grasp

upon the horse's bridle, and led it forward a few steps towards the wall, still pointing onward. Suddenly the cavalier shook the bridle from his hold, dashed his spurs into his horse's sides, and galloping forward like lightning among the men on foot, who had nearly by this time completed their preparations, he laid about him with his sword in the most indiscriminate manner, striking down one, and cutting at another, much to the surprise of his companions, whom he had left on a little mound where first they had taken their stand.

Finding themselves thus assailed by a single man, the Frondeurs, though scattered back from their prisoner by the first onset, were about to show some resistance, and more than one musket was unslung, when the rest of the horsemen came down at an easy canter to the scene of the affray.

"What is the matter? what is the matter?" cried he who seemed their chief; "why, mon cher De Vitray, you have spoiled the hanging!"

"Vive Dieu!" exclaimed Monsieur de Vitray, for it was no other, who had come so timely to the aid of the young Cavalier; "vive Dieu! they were going to hang my phœnix of an Englishman, who can be no more of a spy than I am. Ah, coquins!" he cried, shaking his sword at the Frondeurs; "is it thus ye show yourselves Frenchmen? Know that the true character of your nation is generous hospitality towards all strangers, calm and tender consideration before you proceed to acts of violence, gentle and magnanimous humanity when the combat is over, as well as noble and fearless daring in it. This is the true character of Frenchmen; but such villains as ye are would send forth into the world a very different report of our nation."

"But, mon cher De Vitray," said the chief of the cavaliers, "we must inquire into this business—we must not really deprive our dearly-beloved partisans of the pleasure of hanging a gentleman, without we find the gentleman has some good cause to assign why he should not be hanged. There—there—do not let that

boy untie him so fast; for it is much more easy to keep the stag than to catch him."

"Monseigneur le Duc d'Elbeuf," replied De Vitray, making him a low bow, and laying his hand upon his heart, "I pledge you my honour that this gentleman cannot be a spy, as these vile roturiers call him. He left my dwelling in Bretagne not above six days ago. I, who travelled with all speed, in answer to your highness's summons, only arrived last night, so that he cannot have been here two days, however fast he might come. There must be some mistake. Permit me to alight and discover what it is."

"Good faith, I will alight too, and be at the opening of the wallet," replied the duke. "Here, Mezier, hold the horse."

The bourgeois guard, who had so nearly terminated all the adventures of the young Cavalier, had suspended their demonstrations of hostility towards Monsieur de Vitray on the approach of the other horsemen, but still stood at a little distance glaring upon their victim, whose limbs had been by this time freed by the eager hands of little Ball-o'-fire.

Henry, however, was still totally unable to move from the exhausting agony of his wound and the loss of blood he had sustained. He lay, therefore, on the grass, where the boy unbound him, while Monsieur de Vitray, the Duc d'Elbeuf, and several noblemen and gentlemen who accompanied him, crowded round. The circumstances of his situation were explained in a few words, and his innocence of all intention of acting as a spy clearly established to the satisfaction of all.

"Pardi! I have a great inclination, De Vitray," said the Duc d'Elbeuf, who at that time acted as generalissimo for the Parliament of Paris, "I have a great inclination to make the rope these fellows were about to use serve to hang up some of themselves, for they well deserve it."

"I pray you, Monseigneur, do not think of it," said Henry, in a faint voice; "they hardly deserve such severe treatment as that."

"Oh, not for seeking to hang you, Sir Englishman," replied the duke, laughing with the idle levity of the times, "but for beating the enemy before we came; you must know that we were proceeding to seek these very gentlemen whom our friends here have scared away. Get ye gone, knaves," he added, turning to the foot soldiers; "get ye gone, and next time ye want to hang some one, choose him from among yourselves. It will be rare luck, in that case, if ye fall upon an honest man. Away with ye! get ye gone! Come, De Vitray, what wilt thou do now? Wilt thou come and play at rackets? Wilt thou go and storm St. Denis? Wilt thou away and harangue the parliament?"

"By your good leave, Monseigneur," replied De Vitray, "I will see my young friend here safely bestowed; for, as you may perceive, he is badly wounded; that done, I will join your highness where you will, and do what you will, for the honour of France, which is indeed a country, for whose inestimable excellence over every other country on the face of the earth, we can never do enough to show ourselves grateful to Heaven, by proving ourselves worthy of the benefit."

"Well, then, meet me at the palace in an hour," replied the duke, laughing, "and, by that time, I will have devised something pertinent to prove ourselves inestimably grateful for the inestimable benefit of being the inestimable children of this inestimable country. Fare thee well till then; stay with the wounded man, and I will send thee a brancard to carry him to thy hotel."

"I know not whether that mad duke will keep his word," said De Vitray, as the Duke of Elbeuf rode away, leaving him, and three servants who accompanied him, with the young Cavalier and his page; "it's just like him either to forget, or never to send, for the joke's sake. Hie thee in, too, Jacques, and fetch out a brancard to carry in our young friend."

The Duc d'Elbeuf, however, kept his word, and, before the return of the servant, two stout Parisian porters appeared carrying a board fixed upon handles,

and covered with matting, on which Henry Masterton was raised and borne into the city. The hotel of Monsieur de Vitray was some way off, and the pain of being borne so far through the close streets of a town brought so dreadful a thirst on the wounded man that he was obliged to ask for drink several times as they proceeded. Closing his eyes as much as possible—for the very passing objects, as they flitted by him, were painful to him in the feverish irritation which he now felt—Henry saw little of the city through which he was carried; and it was only as he entered the hotel of his kind friend that he looked up and beheld a handsome courtyard, with a number of servants, who, taking the tone of their master, as is ever the case, crowded round to lend every assistance that was in their power.

Laid on a soft and easy bed, and refreshed with some wine and water, the young Cavalier obtained a degree of relief; but this was only temporary, for the arrival of a surgeon soon condemned him once more to exquisite torture in the extraction of the ball, which had lodged deep among the bones and muscles of the shoulder. It was long before it could be withdrawn, but from the moment that it was so he experienced comparative ease, and the man of healing declared that, with perfect quiet and care, the wound, though certainly dangerous, was not likely to prove mortal.

The curtains of his bed were drawn, the windows darkened, and exhaustion overpowered both pain and anxiety; he fell into a profound sleep, long, deep, death-like. At first the surgeon, who visited him a few hours afterward, judged this slumber a favourable symptom: but he began to change his opinion as a bright red spot appeared on the invalid's cheek, while the restless tossing which, after a time, took possession of his whole frame, spoke high inflammation in the wounded part, and fever through the whole system. At length the young Englishman opened his eyes, but it was without one recollection of where he was, or who were the persons near him. His language was incoherent and rude, his eyes flaming, and his struggles

to rise those of a madman. "Where was his Emily?" he demanded; "why did they keep his Emily from him? They might conceal her where they liked, but he would find her if she were above the earth;" and then again he insisted upon being permitted to rise, that he might go to the Benedictine convent in the quartier St. Jacques; none could tell him where she was but Dom André, and to him he would go.

As he spoke in English, not one word of what he said was understood by any of those who attended him, except his faithful attendant little Ball-o'-fire, who never quitted his bedside, but who was unluckily incompetent to translate his master's desires to those around. At length, however, Monsieur de Vitray, who visited his chamber frequently, and tried to console him with the information that the air of France was peculiarly salutary and efficacious in curing wounds, caught the words "*Quartier St. Jacques*,"—"*Dom André*," repeated several times in the ravings of the invalid; and, with the minute and delicate kindness which he displayed on every occasion, he sent with all speed for the Benedictine, who had been, as it happened, the companion of his journey to Paris.

The monk came without loss of time, and approached the bedside of the wounded man. "Where is Emily?" exclaimed Henry, sitting up in spite of the efforts of his attendants; "where is my Emily? why do you keep her from me?"

"Ha!" cried the monk, in some surprise: "ha! is it so? that might have been divined too;" and, sitting down by the wounded Cavalier, he spoke to him for long in English; assured him that he should see his Emily as soon as he was well: and, with those kind and soothing words of hope, which have an influence on madness itself, he prevailed on him to lie down again and keep himself calm and silent. The inducement to tranquillity that he held out to him, whenever the delirium caused him to rave, was the expectation of seeing Emily sooner.

As long as he remained ill, the Benedictine said he

could not hope to see her, and, as his recovery depended upon his keeping quite quiet, every movement that he made, and every word that he uttered, would retard the accomplishment of his hopes. Such arguments were all efficacious upon an ear that was deaf to every other persuasion, and Henry continued calm and tranquil as long as the monk remained by his bedside. When he quitted him, however, which he was obliged to do in the course of the day, the raving returned upon him instantly; and it seemed that he had fixed his whole hopes of recovering Emily on the knowledge which the Benedictine possessed of her abode, and feared to see him depart, lest he also should elude his search.

The monk, on his part, appeared to take a deep interest in the fate of the young Cavalier, and, after leaving him for a short time to communicate with his superior, he returned and took up his abode at the dwelling of Monsieur de Vitray, devoting himself entirely to the care of the wounded man.

Nor was the tendance which he paid of that common kind which an habitual devotion to the works of charity renders but mechanical in many of the religious orders of the Romish church. There seemed to be deeper and more powerful feelings mingled with his humanity, and as he sat beside the young Cavalier, either when he slept or when he lay quiet beneath his eye, he would gaze fixedly upon him; and the traces of many deep emotions would pass over his countenance—like the shadows of clouds which, driven over a wide landscape, show that something dark and heavy is passing across the sky, and yet display not in the least its form or hue to those who do not look upon the sky itself. A bright and hectic flush too would at times come up in his pale cheek, and then fade away again in a moment. At other times his brow would knit, and his eye would flash as if some fearful wrath had seized upon his heart, and he would cross himself devoutly, and murmur some brief prayer, as if to lay the demon that suddenly possessed him. Altogether, indeed, his minutest actions showed that his whole life was a fearful

struggle between feelings and passions ungovernably strong, and the mild principles of a gentle and pacific creed. When contradicted, his eye would flash and his brow would darken, like the lightning and the cloud; but a moment—a single instant would bring it all to an end; and yet that very brief heat might serve to show what would be the outbreaking of feelings more potently aroused in the same bosom. Still he seemed to devote his whole mind to gentleness and kindness; and to strive, as men seldom strive, to conquer all that was harsh, or dark, or evil in his own heart. To Henry he was calmness and charity itself; he bore with the irritability of sickness and the ragings of delirium; and, by the efforts of a strong mind, directed to so simple a task as soothing a sick and phrensied man, he kept him quiet when the voice of no one else had the slightest effect, and was rewarded by seeing, at the end of three days, the inflammation abate, and the fever begin to diminish.

Monsieur de Vitray himself was invariable in his kindness, and often visited his young friend; but by this time, at the persuasions of the Duc d'Elbeuf, he had taken a decided part in the intrigues and struggles of the Fronde, and with his peculiarities laughed at, his talents employed, and his purse borrowed, he passed the greater part of his time with the faction to which he had attached himself. Thus the care of the young Cavalier fell principally upon the Benedictine and the page, who sat in silence the livelong day on the other side of his master's bed, ready to obey the slightest word of the monk, whose care and benevolence he seemed fully to appreciate.

From the pale and haggard countenance of his lord, his bright dark eyes would continually turn to that of the Benedictine, and would rest there long when their direction was unobserved, seeming to scan every line and examine every feature, as if there was something still unsatisfied and doubtful upon his mind. Whatever it was that he sought to discover, the impression which the monk made upon him was certainly not unfavourable;

for though as bold as fire, he would have opposed the highest or the greatest of human beings, had he thought their directions prejudicial to his master, he took care to observe, as an oracle, the orders of the Benedictine, and not only to obey them himself, but to see they were obeyed by others.

Care and skill, and unity of purpose had, as I have said, its full effect upon Henry Masterton; and though at the beginning of the second day the surgeon had almost judged his case hopeless, by the end of the third all fear of a fatal termination was removed. During that night he slept soundly and well, and on the following morning he woke with his mind restored to its natural state. The monk had passed the night beside him, and after sitting by him a short time longer, he warned him of the necessity of perfect quiet, and left him to return for a few hours to his convent.

CHAPTER IX.

"I HAVE to thank you for infinite care and infinite kindness," said Henry Masterton, in a faint voice to the Benedictine, when he returned in the evening. "My boy has been telling me of all you have done for me, and how gently you have borne conduct which, had it not proceeded from an alienated mind, had well deserved far more stern rebuke, and even as it was, might well have exhausted your patience."

"I have learned by sad experience, my son," replied the Benedictine, "that sternness to a woman or a sick man is worse than thrown away. Had I known long ago to bear trifling provocations as a wise man or a good man should, many a bitter pang and many a grievous sin should I have spared myself. And what renders it worse, perhaps, many a fault and many an agony might have been spared to others too. But do

not praise me before I have deserved it. To you I have behaved but as a Christian and a man of common sense should behave to his fellow-mortal; and provocations given in delirium must have a madman to rebuke them. I fear me, I have not yet acquired the glorious power of commanding myself under the real excitement of the passions, and God deliver me from the trial! But how feel you now?"

"Far better, but still very weak," replied Henry. "But I think that I should soon recover great strength, if I were at any certainty concerning those dear friends of whom I lost all trace at Dinan. Have I dreamed it, or did you not promise me, in my delirium, that you would soon enable me to discover the Lady Margaret and the Lady Emily Langleigh?"

"I gathered from the wandering words you occasionally spoke, my son," replied the monk, "that you had somehow lost them, of which I was not aware before. Nor do I even know at this moment how it happened that you did not either find them at Dinan, or acquire the means of following wherever they went."

Henry raised himself on his arm to reply, by telling the events which had awaited him on his return to the place where he had left the Lady Emily, but the monk stopped him ere he began.

"Forbear, my son! forbear at present," he said. "You are not yet in a fit state to speak of such subjects. To-morrow, if you be strong enough, we will converse upon them at large."

"Indeed, my good father," replied the young Cavalier, "the anxiety I suffer under the uncertainty of ever finding again those to whom I am attached by every tie of affection, injures me far more than were I to speak for an hour."

"Be at peace on that score, my son," the monk answered. "As yet, it is true, I know not where the persons are whom you seek, because I have made no inquiries; and it may be even difficult, in the present state of Paris and of the country round, to gain any immediate communication with them. Nevertheless,

believe me when I tell you, the clew to find them is in my hands, and I can never lose it. I will discover, as soon as possible, where they are; and before you are well enough to seek them yourself, I shall either have obtained all the information you desire, or I will yield the search to you, and enable you to trace it infallibly to its conclusion. With this you must rest satisfied for the present."

"That I can do with pleasure," replied the invalid; "for in truth it is far more than I expected. I believed that I had dreamed, or that you had merely promised me tidings in order to quiet me in my delirium; and I feared again to lose the traces of those who are dearest to me on earth. That fear, as you may easily imagine, was enough to make me both wretched and ill; but it is over now; and as I am sure of finding them ultimately, I will rest satisfied with that hope, and not exhaust myself with fruitless anxieties. Under these feelings, I can speak of them with perfect tranquillity; and if you obtain any tidings, I trust you will let me hear them as soon as possible, for depend upon it, they will be more balmy to my wound than any thing the surgeon can apply."

Henry would fain have pursued the subject, but the monk was silent, and even grave, and for the two following days he not only avoided all conversation upon that particular point, but replied to all the young Cavalier's questions by bidding him rest satisfied that he would keep his word. At the same time there was a kind of gloomy thoughtfulness came over him whenever the name of Emily Langleigh was mentioned, which seemed to speak no great pleasure in the theme. Nevertheless, whether when alone with Henry Masterton, or when there were others present, he seemed far more calm and self-possessed than he had been when they first met in Britanny. There were few of those fits of abstraction which the young Cavalier had formerly remarked in his behaviour, and none of those wild bursts of passionate feeling which had broken in upon their conversation during their interview at night.

He was grave, and even sad; but tranquil and unmoved; and yet there was still a certain indescribable something in his deportment which no one could see without feeling that he was a man in whom the exhibition of strong and violent passions had not been restrained till he had himself suffered bitterly from their lash. All that he said was reasonable, clear, intelligent, though often somewhat too keen and powerful for the subjects on which he spoke. He did not appear to measure ordinary events by the same rules with other men; and in his mind there seemed withal that nicely balanced equilibrium of strong judgment and vehement passion which might be considered the perfection and height of the human character, were it not so finely poised as to be easily deranged. Even when his mind appeared the calmest, even when his conversation was the most free and flowing, there was something in it all that still struck one as unsafe; and the occasional gleam of his eye—the sudden and uncalled-for pause—the moment of total absence—and the rapid transition of his thoughts, all gave indications of a state which was not, but which soon might be. Those who have climbed up the side of a slumbering volcano will know what I mean; for while they have walked on, amid calm tranquillity, and verdure, and luxuriant richness, they must have sometimes stumbled over the pumice, or waded through the ashes; and seeing at every step the traces of fire and destruction, must have doubted the security of the present from the fearful evidences of the past.

Satisfied, however, that the Benedictine would not have pledged his word to any thing that he had not the absolute power of performing, Henry Masterton felt certain of at length tracing out her he loved, and in that certainty daily recovered strength. The monk watched him attentively during several days with the same kind care that he had shown in the height of his illness; but gradually as the vigour of the young Cavalier's frame returned, his impatience to hear more of what so immediately concerned him, urged him to press Dom André upon the subject he seemed willing to avoid.

The course of conversation is much more easily turned with a sick and feeble man than with one in strong health, and Henry soon contrived to force it on towards the topic next his heart.

It was the first morning that he had been permitted to sit up, and they were speaking of the manner in which he had received his wound. The train of ideas soon led them back to his whole journey, and thence to its cause; and the Benedictine was either less disinclined to hear, or Henry was more determined to speak, for he went on to detail all that had occurred at Dinan, and desirous of leading the monk to say more of Emily, without wringing any tidings from him by questions, he painted in the liveliest colours the agony of mind he had suffered on losing sight of her at first, and all the anxiety of endeavouring to trace her steps towards Paris.

"And yet," said the monk, abruptly, and fixing on him a grave and searching glance,—"and yet this is she who is to be your brother's wife!"

Henry started, and then turned very red and very pale, for in the freedom of communication which had lately established itself between him and the Benedictine, he had forgotten that his own love for Emily, his brother's situation, and all their present circumstances and future purposes were not well known and open. He paused before he replied, for though the monk had displayed towards himself a generous kindness which well merited some return of confidence, yet he felt that however willingly he would have trusted him with the knowledge of his own private history and affairs, yet he had no right to reveal aught respecting his brother, especially when what he had to reveal was any thing but honourable to him. Even had he had such a right, he would have shrunk from the exposure of all that he knew; and he remained silent.

"And yet this is she," repeated the monk more sternly, "who is to be your brother's wife! Young man, you speak of her not as becomes such relationship; and when I know and feel that such is the case

—when I see into your bosom as plainly as if there were a window there, am I to be the person to bring you near her again? Speak."

Henry Masterton, however much embarrassed, was not one to quail before any one, and he replied, "No, my good father, she is not to become my brother's wife. She does not, and has never desired it. He does not, and has never desired it; and the only person who ever did so is no more—my father. That engagement is therefore at an end. But the promise you have made me unconditionally is not at an end, and cannot be till it be fulfilled."

"Were the promise an evil one, my son," replied the monk, "I would break it as the wind breaks a rush. But first tell me—"

"If, my good father," interrupted the young Cavalier, "if it be your purpose to force me to betray secrets that are not mine; by refusing, except on that condition, to fulfil your own promise—a promise on which my happiness so deeply depends—if such be your purpose, learn that I too can be stern in doing what I think my duty, and that your purpose will fail; for rather than breathe one word that I think myself bound to keep in silence, I would cast away the hope you gave me, and leave the rest to the will of a good God."

"You are too warm, my son," replied the monk, banishing from his brow a heavy frown that had been gathering thick upon it,—"you are too warm. I have no such unworthy purpose. I seek no confidence but that which is willingly given; and I believe, even though you are yet in the hot and fiery blood of youth, that you would not do so foul a wrong as rob your brother of the love of his promised bride—no, not though your own heart broke in suppressing what it felt." The monk fixed his keen dark eye steadfastly upon the countenance of his companion, which glowed with a redder hue than it had known for many days. Some men might have mistaken that blush for one of conscious guilt; but the Benedictine was a keen and experienced observer of all those shades of expression

which write upon the varying tablet of the face the history of the heart within; and he judged rightly in attributing that glow to nobler and purer feelings.

"I will keep my promise to the letter," he added, "but I must ask you one question, and exact from you one promise. Tell me, then, does your brother know of your love for Emily Langleigh? Did he know of it before his arrest in Devonshire?"

"I might answer safely, I believe, that he does, and that he did," replied the young Cavalier. "But I will in no degree deceive you, father. My love for Emily Langleigh has never been the subject of words between my brother and myself. I feel sure that he saw it—that he knew it, even before we knew it ourselves—but we never spoke of it. It passed all in silence."

"Then do you think that knowledge influenced him at all in his unwillingness to conclude his own marriage?" demanded the monk, eagerly.

"Doubtless it did," replied Henry Masterton, and he was going to add, "but there were other reasons also;" when remembering that those words might lead to further discussion, he merely said, "Doubtless it did! But you declared you would limit your questions to one, good father; I have replied to two."

The monk made no answer for some time; but fixed his eye upon the floor with that sort of fixed gaze, the very intensity of which betrays that it is perfectly without sight of any thing. "Doubtless it did!" repeated the Benedictine, thoughtfully; "doubtless it did!" and he raised his hand to his brow, and paused for a moment, as if to reconcile that answer with facts in the possession of his own mind. "Well!" he added, at length withdrawing his hand, evidently still unsatisfied; "well! I have, as you say, my son, already exceeded—the promise I exact is this, that you would not attempt, by any means, to discover the young lady of whom you are in search till I give you information where she is; and, on my part, I promise you that I will give you that information as soon as by my utmost endeavours I can ascertain the fact exactly."

"You demand a hard forbearance, good father," replied the young Cavalier.

"I exact it but for your own good, on my faith!" answered the monk. "In the first place, you are not yet in a fit state to undertake any such inquiry, my son; and I see that you are already eager to begin it. In the next place, you would most likely, in the present state of this country, plunge yourself before a week were over into some new dangers or difficulties. You have experienced in one day how long incautious haste may delay your progress, and were you to follow your own guidance you might again fall upon worse obstacles than those you have already met. I once, in time past, did an injury to one of your family; at least," he added quickly, "I would fain believe that I was misled—that I was deceived—that I was the offender, instead of the offended—that the wrong rests upon me; and that, though the remembrance of having done evil be bitter enough, the atonement is in my power to make. I now, therefore, seek to wipe away that memory by doing you a service. Will you give me your promise?"

"I will!" replied Henry Masterton, remembering all the real services the Benedictine had conferred. "I will! but, of course, that promise must have a limit. If within a certain time—say a week—you will give me the information you promise, till the end of that time I will make no effort on my own part."

"At the end of a week—ay, or a fortnight," replied the monk, "you will be still unfit to make any effectual effort for yourself. However, although I think by that time I could obtain the information I desire, yet you must give me three days longer, and say that for ten days from this time you will not attempt to seek the Lady Emily Langleigh: while I pledge myself, by all I hold most sacred, to use all means of diligence to discover her present abode; and, if by the end of that time I have gained no further information, to give you that which I at present possess, and leave you to make what use of it you will."

"Well! be it so," replied the young Cavalier, who

was beginning to feel exhausted with so long a conversation. "Be it so; though I should think, good father, it would be much more simple and easy to tell me all you know now than to keep me so long in darkness and mystery."

"There may be many reasons," replied the monk, "against my doing so. You yourself have argued, my son, that we have no right to tamper with the secrets of others. I hold the same opinion, and respect your reserve; but I demand also that you, on your part, should not press me in regard to mine. Like the many," he continued, turning the conversation with a very brief link of connexion to another subject, as he was frequently in the habit of doing,—"like the many, you mete with one measure to others, and with another to yourself. Oh, how I see that in the world!—how I have seen it in the scenes which I have beheld in Paris this very morning! The parliament, jealous of its privileges, resists the least violation with determined vigour, and cries loudly against the injustice of those who would invade the rights of other orders of the state; yet, at the very time, that same body who are so jealous of their own privileges are attacking the known and acknowledged prerogative of the crown while exercised by the regent. Oh, self-interest! that ponderous overpowering weight, how it loads the scale of justice even in the steadiest hand!"

Henry was fatigued; and, willing to listen, but not to reply to any thing but that which concerned Emily, he sat in silence while the Benedictine gave him a sketch of the troubled state of the French capital, and explained to him how the arts of the Cardinal de Retz had overthrown the party of the Duke of Elbeuf. "From such scenes of tumult and confusion," he added, "it is but a slight transition to turn one's eyes to the military affairs of the city. Yesterday the post of Charenton was forced by the court troops; and to-day some bodies of the horse, whom they call the Mazarins, pushed on to the very fauxbourg. They were met, however, by the Marquis of Noirmoutier with some

other gentlemen, and were driven back with disgrace and loss. It is strange enough, too, that at the head of Noirmoutier's cavaliers was an Englishman whom you know well."

"Indeed!" replied Henry Masterton; "was it Walter Dixon?"

"As opposite a man as God ever created!" replied the Benedictine; "it was Francis Lord Masterton. Nay, start not up! what I tell you is true, my son."

It was the first time that Henry had heard his brother named by the title which had so long been borne by his father; there was something in it painful and striking; and he pressed his hands before his eyes till he familiarized his mind with the sound.

"Are you sure it was my brother?" he demanded at length; "did you see him with your own eyes, good father?"

"I did see him as he returned," replied the monk, "and I know him as well as I know my own sword—but I forget that I wear none—I know him, I would say, as well as I know you, and certainly it was he whom I saw."

"Then you have not learned his dwelling, or aught about him, but the mere fact of his being in Paris?" demanded the young Cavalier, eagerly.

"Your pardon, my son," replied the monk: "I have known that he was in Paris for several days, and I took care to gather news of him from those with whom he consorts. Do you remember that I once asked you whether he had quitted England alone?" and as he spoke, the Benedictine fixed one of his intense and scrutinizing glances upon the countenance of his companion. "That question seemed to be one not palatable to you at the time," he continued; "however, I now know that, whether he left his native land alone, or not, he is here unaccompanied by any one but three French servants."

Henry replied not for some time, but thought deeply; for he could not reconcile the account given by the monk with the facts of which he himself was in pos-

session. "I am glad to hear it," he answered, at length; "I am glad to hear it. Have you learned where he lives, father?"

"Not yet," answered the monk; "but one of his comrades in the war—for he has taken the blue scarf with all the enthusiasm of a Frenchman—one of his comrades has promised to furnish me with it in a few days. I hear, too, that he is gay and light, darting from one scene of excitement to another. Now in the midst of the battle or the skirmish, full of action and surrounded by danger—now in the gay saloon, laughing with the emptiest of the Parisian witlings, or tripping to the squeaking violin with some of the heartless women of the court. Is such his usual and natural character? Are such his habits and his tastes?"

"As different from them as the snow from the rain," replied Henry Masterton.

"But the snow and the rain are both the same element," replied the monk, with somewhat of a bitter smile; "the rain may be frozen into snow, and the snow may easily melt away in water."

"I have used a wrong expression, my good father," replied the young Cavalier; "he is as different from the man you describe as the night is from the day. He is naturally grave, thoughtful, severe. Brave and active, it is true, but shunning the light and volatile society you mention; scorning the idle and the fantastic amusements of which you speak. A man who would rather pass an hour in solitude with some dull book, or ride a wild horse furiously over hill and plain, than figure in the brightest hall that France or England ever produced."

"Then he seeks to escape from thought," replied the monk gravely, "or perhaps, my son, to escape from remorse. The dull book will not banish the upbraiding witness of a man's own heart; and care, to a proverb, sits behind the horseman. It must be excitement—constant, never-ceasing excitement, till fatigue engenders sleep, and sleep forgetfulness: that is the resource of a man whose conscience is loud in

accusation against him. Look not angry, my son, for whether you know your brother's faults or not, depend upon it that no man ever starts from the calm lover of quiet contemplation to the gay and giddy follower of pleasure and amusement, without having something that he seeks to forget."

"I do not wish, my good father, to controvert your position," replied the young Cavalier, "but what I wish to imply is, that I think there must be some mistake in regard to the person. So different is my brother from the character you describe, that I cannot believe it to be him whom you have seen."

"As surely as that you and I now live," replied the monk, rising from his seat; "but I must leave you, my son. Already I feel that I have spoken with you longer, and on more exciting subjects, than, in your weak state, I should have done."

Henry would fain have protracted the conversation, for feelings were awakened in his bosom, and thoughts were busy in his brain, which required relief. There were a thousand questions he still desired to ask—a thousand doubts he would willingly have tried to solve, but the Benedictine could never be won to words when the mood was not on him; and rising, without noticing his young companion's wish to speak further, he left the room.

CHAPTER X.

Such a conversation, protracted to such a length, it may easily be conceived, had no slight effect upon a weakened frame, and an irritable mind. The monk was absent for several hours, but before he returned, Henry Masterton was once more in a high fever, and the good Benedictine was inexpressibly shocked to hear the surgeon declare, that something must have occurred

to agitate the invalid greatly during the day, for that he had nearly lost as much in the course of a few hours as he had gained since the first turn of his malady towards health. God knows how it is, that in trouble and in tendance, in care and anxiety, we beget in ourselves a love for that which has pained, even while it interested us. Certain it is, however, that the monk had acquired, during his attendance on Henry Masterton, a feeling of greater affection and tenderness towards him, than perhaps he had ever known before, to the mere object of charitable care. He had learned to grieve at his sufferings, to watch for their relief; and gradually, by fixing upon that one object the hopes and expectations of the moment—like a child planting an acorn—he sowed the seed of more powerful sympathies than the utmost stretch of his imagination ever figured at the moment.

When he found that the young Cavalier had relapsed into nearly the same state in which his wound had first left him, he felt his anxiety renewed, and not a little heightened, by the consciousness of having contributed to that which had occurred, while, as the reproaches of his own heart were not echoed by any other voice, there was nothing to be abated on the score of pride. All his care, all his attention was renewed, and the object thereof soon began to show signs of amendment. The two great anxieties that weighed upon the mind of Henry Masterton, however, tended very much to retard his recovery. Since his late conversation with the monk, the desire of seeing his brother, and obtaining his renunciation of the hand of Emily, had divided his bosom with the wish to renew his search, and he tormented himself with the thought, that his long illness might prove the means of his losing sight of both. Thus he prolonged the evil by repining at it, but nevertheless he continued slowly to recover, and day by day regained some portion of the strength he had lost.

While such things were passing in the hotel of Monsieur de Vitray, other events, closely connected with the tale we are telling, were taking place in the same

city, and to these we must turn for a moment. It is not, indeed, necessary to notice the particulars of that great political drama which was acting around, and which but little affect the current of this story; nor indeed should we deviate from the individual history of him whose adventures form the chief matter of these volumes, were not the scene we are going to describe necessary to the full understanding of what is to follow. One brief sketch, also, will express all that we could desire, and it is one entirely of private life.

It was, then, in a large and magnificent saloon, filled with every thing that luxury could invent to pamper the most fastidious taste; surrounded with books and instruments of music, soft couches, and splendid hangings, that there sat, one night, about the period to which we have lately referred, one of the most beautiful creatures that ever adorned the earth. The chamber that she occupied seemed remote from the rest of the house, for no sound was to be heard in it, but a distant peal of gay laughter, as it echoed along the lengthened corridors from some far room of entertainment.

Her dress was rich, but there was more than richness in it; there was that exquisite taste, that perfect knowledge of all that could heighten or display her beauty, which is not always the follower of loveliness; and, although nothing that art could do to improve beauty was wanting in her apparel, yet the whole seemed devoid of art, nor was there the least thing added which nature would have been better without.

She sat in solitude, and more than once, when the sound of merriment met her ear, the tears started to her eyes, but they were controlled in a moment, and wiped away with care; and she would strive to amuse the minutes as best she might, now casting her hand over a lute, now letting her eye rest for a few minutes on the pages of a book, now pulling to her a frame of embroidery, and working eagerly a few stitches, as if her life depended on the employment; but taking the book, the lute, and the frame, each in turn, with the

gesture of impatience, and laying it down again with a long deep sigh.

At length there was a sound of many voices in the street; the roll of carriages, the clatter of horses, the shouting of torch-bearers, and the steps of a number of persons were heard passing along some distant chambers. One after another, the guests seemed to depart, the noise in the street ceased, and all was silence, save the echo of a slow, heavy footfall, as it approached the chamber where she sat. Her eye lighted up with joy, and her lips arched into a smile, as those sounds struck her ear; and the next moment, the rich tapestry fluttered and swelled with the sudden opening of a door: it was pushed aside, and a cavalier entered whom it were needless to describe. It was Lord Masterton.

The flush of excitement was upon his cheek, and perhaps his eye had borrowed a little of its brightness from the juice of the grape. He was perfectly sober; he was not stimulated even to the least forgetfulness of one pang, or one regret; but he was a little fevered both in mind and body, and he cast himself down by the Lady Eleanor Fleming with a look of wearied exhaustion. He did it not, however, unkindly, for he let his hand drop upon hers, and clasp naturally round the fair and delicate fingers that met his touch. It was as if he had said, "How heartless! how soulless! is the commune of the general world. How little is it my place!—My home is here!"

Lady Eleanor received him in silence, though the intense love that looked forth from her deep blue eyes, and the radiant gladness of her lip, told him that he was welcome! how welcome! At length she said, "Have you had a happy evening, my lord?—Your noble friends have staid late!"

"Happy! Eleanor," he replied; "what is happiness?" The tears swam in her eyes, almost to overflowing, and he added, "I know what joy is, Ellen, and what pleasure is; but I fear me, that happiness is not a fruit of this earth"

Oh, Frank!" she said, mastering her emotion; "but eight short weeks ago, my society was to be your happiness; my love the crowning blessing of your existence! But times have changed, and your feelings too. I cannot blame you."

"My feelings are not changed, dear Ellen," he replied in a tone of mingled tenderness and impatience; "my feelings are not changed, and the only joy I know in life is thus sitting beside you." Lady Eleanor sighed, and he went on, "You ask, beloved, if I have had a happy evening, and say that my guests staid late,—my evening was not happy, for you were not with me; and these men not only staid late, but drank deep."

"Oh, Frank!" said Lady Eleanor, laying her hand upon his arm, and gazing tenderly on his face; "oh, Frank! if my society constitute your happiness, why not seek it still, as you were wont to do? Why not let us still be all in all to each other? why not let me be with you more?"

"Nay, nay, Eleanor," replied the young nobleman, "is it not your own fault that you are not more with me? Did you not, yourself, when we first set foot in Paris,—did you not voluntarily declare, that you would not mingle with the society it contained? Did you not pray me to let you wear away the time of our stay in solitude, and insist upon my keeping as far secret as I could that you were my companion?"

"I did, Frank! I did!" replied the lady; "I did, because I knew that there were many here of our own country, who might—who must remember me too well—because weakly, after having chosen my part, and made up my mind to the sacrifice, I did not choose to expose myself to the finger of scorn. Perhaps I feared to expose you, too, to danger. But still remember, oh! remember, Frank, that I thought we were to remain here but one short week, and I dreamed, that even then, every moment not consumed by him I loved in absolute business would be given to cheer my solitude, as I had given every moment of mine to cheer his, in days gone by."

Lord Masterton rose from his seat, and paced the room for a moment with a quick step. He was evidently pained and impatient; and yet a feeling of deep love and tenderness made him master the irritation which had been aroused by the reproaches he had heard. It cost him an effort, however, to do so; and he remained silent for a moment or two, while he took more than one turn across the floor of the saloon, striving not only to quell all anger, but to recall that gentle, heart-felt kindness, which a reproach—whether just or unjust—never fails to scare away for the time; and which, perhaps, never again makes that heart so completely its home, from which it has once been banished. Let not people speak lightly of lovers' quarrel, —lovers should never quarrel, if they would love well and love long.

At length he paused, and turning to Lady Eleanor, he took her hands in his—"Ellen," he said, "we will quit this place as soon as possible; and now hear what it is that often drives me from your side into scenes of tumult and danger, or of folly and merriment. Often, often, Ellen, in those moments when I could be happiest, a voice suddenly comes upon my ear, as if it were borne upon the air, and asks me, if I am not accessary to the murder of my father—if it was not I that spilt his blood—if my love and my love's concealment did not bring about his death? Turn not so pale, Ellen, but speak to me; tell me that it is all a dream, a phantom of my own imagination; repeat to me all those specious arguments that I urge with but a feeble voice to my own heart, in order to prove that I am guiltless of that at least: to prove that, as I would sooner have lost my own life, than seen him lose his, I am innocent of the act that ultimately caused his death; although that act took place with my knowledge and consent; and oh, Ellen, above all, consider how such thoughts may lead a man into any scenes which may drive them even for a time away."

"And do you think, Frank," demanded Lady Eleanor, not replying directly to what he said—not meeting

openly the painful subject before her, but turning it aside with that peculiar skill which none but woman possesses, and which woman can ever command, even in the whirlwind of her passion—"do you think," she demanded, plunging herself, as well as entangling him, in questions where the advantage of complaint was all her own—questions very different from the matter which he had touched upon, and yet so nearly connected with it, that, like the morass and the green moor, it required a very cool and unmoved mind to distinguish the one from the other—"do you think that I have nothing to forget? Do you never dream that there is a drop of poison mingled, too, with my cup, and that some antidote is as necessary to my peace as to yours? What have I not sacrificed for you, Frank Masterton? —Nay, I say it not because I regret what is past, or that I would undo what is done: for you I sacrificed every thing, and willingly, most willingly—honour and virtue, and state and station, and woman's best inheritance, fair fame; but it was that you might be to me, and I to you, the all in all. Oh, Frank! are such things a dream? or are they real? Do they pass away like the thin vapour of the morning? or are they licked up like the early drops of dew, that shine like diamonds for an hour while the day is fresh, and then are dispelled by the very beams that lent them their unreal splendour? Forbid it, Heaven! Frank Masterton; forbid it, Heaven! for did I think it was so, and that all I have done were vain, I might perchance add another crime to the one gone past recall, and die in very bitterness!"

She spoke with the lightning spirit of strong passion flashing from her dewy eyes; and, as she roused and recalled all the agonizing ideas which haunted her in her solitude, and the thought, the bare dream, of ill-requited love came over her brain, a fearful and uncertain gleam, as if the glory of the mind were falling from its sphere, lighted up her features for one brief moment. It passed instantly away, as the flood of woman's tenderness poured out from her heart, and casting herself upon his bosom, she exclaimed, "No,

no, no, it cannot be, Frank! I will not believe it! There are many who have loved well and deeply—there are many who have believed that they loved—there are many who have sinned as deeply as we have, and who have changed like the light wind; but there are few, I feel sure that there are few, who have ever loved with the same intense and burning passion that animates our hearts; and those who have so loved have never changed! Tell me, beloved, shall we not quit this place—shall we not go to some spot, where, amid the lovely scenes of nature, we may forget the world; and, by the very pain that mingles with every hour of our happiness, perhaps atone the fault that cankers all our peace?"

She spoke with a fervour that was not to be resisted in the state at which Frank Masterton's mind had then arrived. He still loved her deeply, dearly, ardently. Remorse, indeed, preyed upon his mind, and drove him forth to seek, in strife or in gayety, that forgetfulness which assumes for a time the aspect of mental peace. But even remorse had not yet shaken his love. That time was still in the future, which comes inevitably, fatally, irresistibly as death itself, whenever love has not its support in virtue—the time when custom has worn away the strength of passion, when remorse has sapped the basis of affection, and when the whole fabric, on which we counted as a rock falls into a mere visionary memory, that we can scarce believe to have been real—when the sacrifices that have been made appear great, as the feelings that prompted them become small—when we grow covetous of occasions of offence—when light words are the brands of heavy quarrels; and when, cheating ourselves, we seek cunningly to furnish our hearts with just reasons for loving no longer a person that we have long ceased to love.

To such a state—though it be the invariable end of passion unsupported by esteem, and though often all the torments of jealousy, and doubt, and suspicion founded on past frailty, remain even after love is gone

—to such a state Frank Masterton had not yet arrived. He loved Lady Eleanor with undiminished fire: he fancied passion an excuse for vice; he saw but the sacrifices she had made for him, and by the greatness of those sacrifices he judged the extent of her affection, and depended on its durability. Yet the first step was taken, the voice of remorse was heard, and time only was wanting in the progress of sin towards punishment. Nevertheless, he still felt strongly, that his was not the hand which should inflict the slightest wound on a bosom that laid itself open to any blow he chose to strike; and he reproached himself with the selfishness which led him to seek in any other society than hers amusement and occupation for those thoughts that were too often busy on subjects for regret.

"Yes, beloved," he answered, pressing her to his bosom, "yes, we will quit these busy scenes, and in some lowlier dwelling, among the simple cantons of the Swiss, we will try to forget all the world. If memory will intrude, and sorrow for offences that cannot be undone must haunt us still, we will meet the phantom together, and find strength in the presence of each other. In the cultivation of the earth, in the beauties of nature, in the society of those we love, we shall find employment, enjoyment, and content. We will both bury what we have been in oblivion; and rank, and fortune, and splendid tending, the superfluities of luxury, and the accessories of state, will be but poor sacrifices for peace and happiness!"

"When, Frank, when," exclaimed Lady Eleanor, "when shall we go to realize so dear a dream? Oh! do not hold it out to me without resolving to give it quick effect: I am tired of this place. It is not that I am tired of the solitude in which I live, for to that, in a great degree, I have condemned myself; but I am tired of seeing so seldom him I love. Oh, Frank! if you knew the sunshine that seems to burst upon my lonely chamber when you return, and the darkness that hangs over it when you are away, I am sure you would make it far more the summer-time for me. Nay, frown not,

my dear lord—I mean not to reproach you—when shall we go?"

"As soon as I can possibly do so with honour," replied the young Cavalier, with somewhat more coldness of manner: "I cannot quit the service in which I am engaged, with propriety, till at least we have recovered those advantages which have lately been the portion of the enemy; in honour I cannot go before."

Lady Eleanor fixed her eyes upon the ground, and sighed. Perhaps she contrasted the present with the past, when honour, duty, loyalty were all forgot to remain but an hour by her side. She said nothing, however, for she knew instinctively how vain reproaches are when a woman has played the losing game of yielding all without reserve—when no retreat is left—when she has given herself bound a willing slave into the hands of another—when she cannot rely upon the world, because she has cast off the world's law—when she cannot repose entirely on herself, because she has thrown from her the strength of her own virtue—when she has nothing to confide in but the mercy of a creature who has already been cruel enough to despoil her of all the rest! She knew, she felt, that every word more of reproach must untwine a fresh tie, and she was silent; convinced, however, by the first opposition of the words honour and propriety to her wishes, that something was already lost, and that she, who was no longer to be the despot, must sink with fortitude down to the slave.

Lord Masterton remarked her silence, and in it was the only reproach he could have borne. His heart was still too much her own to permit of his giving her pain, without some other passion were called forth to counteract his love.

"Nay, nay, Ellen," he said, as she sat still silent, "do not let us make the moments we are together bitter, when they might be so sweet. I will go, on my honour, as soon as it be possible; and I will not quit you further than is absolutely necessary, even though those fits of painful reflection, to which I have lately

been so subject, should make me gloomy by your side."

"That promise," she replied, while her eyes lighted up with renewed hope, "that promise gives me back my happiness! I ask no society but yours—I never seek to see another being than yourself; neither do I ask you always to smile. Surely, surely, one who has wept so often may well bear to hear a sigh. Let your moments of grief or your moments of happiness be mine—mine alone, and I demand no more. If you be gay, I will be cheerful also; and if you be gloomy, I will strive to dispel your gloom, or, at all events, will divide your care, and lighten the burden by taking one half. But still, I doubt not, Frank, that in the pure air and brilliant scenery of the land towards which we are going to turn our steps, all the gloom that hangs over you in this distracted and distracting city will wear soon away, and that you will remember all your powers of reason. When you do so, I feel sure that you will see that an accident which you would have given worlds to prevent, which occurred in a casual affray, brought on by the resistance of the person on whom it fell, cannot be attributable to you, even in the slightest degree. That which a man is most unwilling to commit, and would strive against with his whole strength, can never be considered as his deed; and surely, Frank, you must have forgotten your usual calm philosophy, to accuse yourself of an act of which you are as guiltless as the babe unborn."

"Sweet sophist!" replied Frank, again casting himself down by her with a smile, though it was but a melancholy one—"sweet sophist! reason with me always thus, and perhaps I may learn to think so too. Time," he added thoughtfully—"time, too, that blunts all things, may deaden that likewise, and I may forget. Do not think, Ellen," he continued abruptly, "do not think that I do not seek to quit these scenes as much as you do, dear one; do not think that I am not sick of all these heartless cabals, where men have not even the glorious plea of ambition to excuse their faction,

and their bloodshed, and their treason—where all is levity. No, no, I will go willingly enough, and this shall be the plan of our lives: with the wealth that we bear with us we will buy, in some sweet valley of the calm, free Helvetic land, a tract of earth, and I will become a tiller of the ground. We will plant the vine, and sow the corn, and we will send forth our sheep and our cattle to the mountains; and in all the little cares and anxieties of husbandry we will forget things that are better not remembered. Should they by chance return, I will take my carbine, and over the rocks and precipices will chase the wild goat or the mountain bear. And you, dear one! the bright, the fascinating, the incomparable Lady Eleanor, shall sink down into the *good dame* of the chalet, and I shall be worthy Master Masterton, the great farmer of Chamouni! It is a worthy ending for a life begun like ours," he added; and though there was a smile upon his lip as he spoke, there was a touch of that sneering bitterness in it all which he had ever found so difficult to repress; and it came coldly upon the heart of her to whom he spoke.

The next sentence too was as bad, but he soon assumed a gayer tone. "And my good brother Harry," he said, "will marry sweet Emily Langleigh, and be as happy as the day is long. 'Tis a strange turn of fate, dear lady, that the life which we lay out for ourselves now—and for which, God knows, we were as little designed by nature as well could be—that this life we lay out is the very one which would have best suited my brother and that fair girl, who as certainly loves him, and will as certainly become his bride as—" He saw that she was somewhat pained, and added, "as that I love you beyond aught on earth, and that I will never for a moment murmur at my fate, whatever it be, if this dear hand be still clasped in mine. Nay, dear Ellen, think not that I murmur even now; so far from it, that I will use means to render the steps I am about to take irretrievable. A man may form his mind to any mode of life, but he is wise when he makes a choice,

after full conviction of its being best, to cast away the means of return. My choice is made, my land is chosen; I have passed the stream, and I will break down the bridge behind me. At first we may find things new and strange; our labours may be fatiguing, and our food seem coarse; but before a year and a day be over our heads, we shall find the task easy, and the fare delicate. Labour will bring repose, and time will cause forgetfulness, but not diminish love."

Lady Eleanor willingly yielded herself to hope, and Lord Masterton, feeling that his absence pained her, for the next three days spent all the time that was not actually employed in the weak wars of the Fronde, by her side. At the end of that time, however, he again began to yield to the necessity of seeking amusement for those dark and gloomy thoughts that pressed upon him, and plunging deep in the light society of the Hotel de Longueville, he remained longer absent than before, knowing that he had given pain he did not choose to witness, and fearing reproaches which he could not answer but by anger. He resolved each day, more and more strongly, to disentangle himself from the cause in which he had engaged solely for occupation, and to seek that calm retreat which he had laid out for Lady Eleanor and himself; but he did nothing further than resolve, and the days passed on without a step towards that object.

In the mean time deeper gloom than ever fell upon the unhappy woman he left in solitude. The fears of losing that love on which she had staked every thing in this life, and, perhaps, beyond it; the reproof of her own heart, and occasionally a gleam of jealous suspicion, parted her lonely hours among them. Often she wept the livelong day, and often, often, when all the horrors of remorse, regret, and jealousy, and despair came thick upon her together, her brain would seem to reel, and she dreamed of deeds of greater madness than that which she had already committed.

At length, one day, during which he whom she loved so passionately had never returned, despair seemed to

master all, and summoning a servant, she bade him carry a billet to a neighbouring chymist. The man went, and returned bearing a small packet. When she was again alone, she dissolved the powder he had brought in a cup of water, gazed on it calmly for a moment, and was raising it to her lips. At that instant a step sounded along the corridor; it was one that her ear could not mistake, and she paused, as if uncertain whether to drink or not. As the step came nearer, however, she placed the cup hastily in a cabinet. She had scarcely done so when Lord Masterton entered. He was all tenderness and affection, and sinking on his bosom, she burst into a passionate flood of tears.

CHAPTER XI.

While the passions, the errors, and the circumstances of his brother were plunging him more and more rapidly into an abyss over whose edge he had voluntarily taken the first step, Henry Masterton speedily recovered sufficiently to rise from his bed. Day by day he gained strength; but the Benedictine, whose care had been renewed with more assiduity than ever, took good heed never to speak on any of those subjects which might agitate his mind anew. For several hours each day he was absent from the chamber of the young Cavalier, but though it did not now want more than three days of the time which he had himself fixed upon as the period at which he was to give his companion news of Emily Langleigh, or to enable him to pursue the search himself, yet he never even distantly alluded to the subject.

It may well be supposed that Henry grew impatient as the time wore on; but he resolved to be silent, and to ask no more questions to which an answer might be refused; but he determined, at the same time, to take

advantage of the space which must intervene before his meeting with Emily, in order to remove the only bar which remained against their union.

His brother was in Paris—well known, it appeared, and easily to be found among the leaders of the Fronde; and though the Benedictine had given him the most positive assurance that he was alone, Henry too well knew the deep hold that Lady Eleanor Fleming had upon his brother's heart to give credence at once to an assertion which implied that he had torn himself away from her. He hoped that it was so indeed; but the brightest hope has ever in its nature a portion of doubt, and he felt that till the news was given him by his brother's own lips he could not believe it fully. At the same time he did not for a moment imagine—whether Frank had or had not separated himself from the lovely but dangerous woman to whom he had attached himself—that he would hesitate for one moment to free Emily Langleigh from an engagement which, however it might mar her happiness, could never contribute to his. Nor did he doubt, notwithstanding all the painful differences which had taken place between his brother and himself, and all the events which had lately occurred to render their feelings painful towards each other, that Frank, when he heard how deep was the attachment which existed between him and Emily, would feel a pleasure in being able to contribute to their happiness. His brother, he thought, would feel it some sort of atonement for all the sorrow he had occasioned, though he could not revoke the errors in which that sorrow had arisen.

His determination therefore was instantly to seek his brother; but as he was well aware that both the Benedictine and the surgeon would oppose his braving the cold air of the winter after so long a confinement to his chamber, he resolved to do so privately in some of those hours when he was left alone. His first step was to send forth little Ball-o'-fire, who by this time had acquired a tolerable stock of French of a certain kind, to ascertain his brother's address, by carrying the

bills of exchange with which he had furnished himself to the same house on whom his brother's bills were drawn. He directed the page at the same time to discover, if possible, at his brother's dwelling, at what hour he went forth each day, and when he usually came home. With the perfect certainty of receiving every information that could be obtained by human ingenuity, he waited impatiently for the boy's return, and amused himself during his absence with looking over the contents of the valise which little Ball-o'-fire had rescued from the hands of the Frondeurs, after he had received his wound.

The letter which had been intrusted to him by Ireton for the General St. Maur was the first thing that met his eye, and recalled to his mind a promise which he had forgot. In Paris he doubted not to be able to hear of the person to whom it was addressed; and, at all events, he was certain of gaining some information at St. Germain's, if, as he believed, the person whom he sought was an officer of rank in the service of the French court. He resolved, therefore, that as soon as he had conferred with his brother, and had discovered the dwelling of Emily Langleigh, he would make the delivery of that letter his next object. When his thoughts on that subject had exhausted themselves, after lingering on it for a time with the slow and lazy consideration of sickness, his mind somewhat gloomily turned to other matters, on which, however important, he had hitherto bestowed but little thought.

His future prospects rose before him; and when he considered how much of the small wealth he had brought over with him had been already expended, how hopeless were the means of obtaining any thing from England, how little interest he possessed in France which might be available for the purpose of procuring some honourable employment, his reflections became any thing but sweet. It was a dark and painful contemplation, the future. No one perhaps on earth was ever more gifted with that light buoyancy of spirit which, on but a narrow foundation, can raise from ma-

terials supplied by the good fairy Hope more splendid fabrics than ever were built with hands. But in the prospect of the coming years, imagination found nothing with which to furnish hope, for the construction of those airy dwellings in which the young and light-hearted love to dwell. It was all dim and desolate, and the most favourable point in the future was its uncertainty. Still it was necessary for Henry Masterton, not only to think of that future, but to fix upon some scheme of proceeding which might enable him to support himself and Emily Langleigh; and he calculated with miserly accuracy how long the small sum which he would possess, on the payment of his bills of exchange, would suffice them upon the most careful footing.

It might do so, he found, even for some years, if he fixed his dwelling in a remote province. In the course of years what might not happen to overthrow the present faction in his native land, and to restore him to his rights and inheritance! In the mean time, where was the hardship, he asked himself, of living on the necessaries without the superfluities of life, especially when the loss of luxuries and state was far, far more than compensated by the presence and the love of one so dear, so beautiful, so good? With the consciousness of innocence, and virtue, and good designs, would not hope and peace be the constant inmates of their cottage, the most cheerful guests by their fireside? With a memory clear and unstained, and a heart that feared no change, what was poverty to him! As he thus thought, dreams not unlike those which busied the imagination of his brother began to cross his mind—the calm retreat, the enjoyment of nature, the day of easy labour, and the night of repose. But still, how different was the prospect to him and to Lord Masterton! There were difficulties and dangers to be overcome, beyond all doubt; but yet to Henry, as he suffered his mind to rest calmly upon the coming years, the whole future, taking its tone from the past, became full of sunshine and light, while to the eyes of his elder brother the sun was for ever covered by a cloud.

While such thoughts as those displayed above, and many others that have passed beyond recall, filled the mind of Henry Masterton, one hour after another slipped away, and the page did not return. At length, however, he came, but accompanied by a grave Parisian trader, who proved to be the person on whom the bills of exchange had been drawn. He excused his intrusion by saying, "that he would not trust such a sum of money with so young a boy," and at the same time placed before Henry himself the amount. The first questions asked by the young Cavalier were, of course, for form's sake, concerning the bills of exchange, and the sum they produced; but the next and more real inquiries were concerning his brother.

The merchant either knew, or pretended to know little in regard to him, except that he had drawn to a large amount upon their house, and that he lived in one of the best hotels in the *Rue des Minimes.*

When asked if he were alone, or accompanied by any of his family, or other persons, he avoided the question; and when pressed, replied that he believed he was totally alone. The house which he inhabited, the merchant further said, was divided into two parts; the lower division being inhabited by two other families, while the whole of the upper part of the mansion, including the first floor, had been engaged by the Lord Masterton.

These were all the tidings that he could or would give, and little Ball-o'-fire remained profoundly silent till his master suffered the merchant to depart. He then began eagerly to tell his story, but before he had uttered ten words, the Benedictine returned with Monsieur de Vitray, and the boy again held his peace.

"Not at all, father! not at all!" exclaimed Monsieur de Vitray, as he entered the room; "it is a chief and distinguishing quality of the French nation; and did I not feel the same interest in every man of noble and generous feeling and education, who happens to need assistance, that I should do in my own brother if I had one—and which, thank God! I have not—I should

be unworthy of the name of a Frenchman. France, *mon cher Dom André*, take my word for it, is the garden of liberal hearts, where every person one meets is ready to do you service. Had it been otherwise, how should I have obtained at once from Monsieur de Longueville the government of the Chateau of Fescamp for our young friend here, whom he had never seen?"

The monk now explained to the young Cavalier, that the Duc de Longueville, Governor of Normandy, had been pleased, at the prayer of Monsieur de Vitray, to intrust to him the government of the castle of Fescamp and the seigneural lands around it, an office both honourable and lucrative. This the generous-hearted Frenchman had solicited in order to preserve his young friend from the same distress which had befallen so many of his countrymen during their exile; but, in his own person, he would receive no thanks, willingly transferring the merit of such active generosity to the whole French nation.

One cause of anxiety was now at once struck away from those which had weighed upon the mind of Henry Masterton; and offering sincere though unostentatious thanks to Monsieur de Vitray, he only stipulated that he might be suffered to remain sufficiently long in Paris to conclude the important business which brought him thither.

"Stay as long as you like! stay as long as you like, my dear young friend," replied Monsieur de Vitray; "I must now leave you, for I have some gentlemen waiting for me below; but stay as long as you like, of course. You have first to get well, and then you have to see Paris, of which you yet know nothing. It would, indeed, take you many years to examine this magnificent city in all its details, and learn all that it contains of beautiful and excellent. There are, nevertheless, three points which I would beg you to remark, before you set out to take a survey of the city, and in which Paris is perfectly incomparable. First, it is incomparable in buildings, size, and disposition; secondly, in wealth and opulence; and thirdly, in amusements,

gayeties, and delights. It cannot be doubted, in the first place, that Paris is the first city in the world in point of buildings and disposition; for if one considers its size, which is as large if not larger than any city on earth; its buildings, which are the highest, the best arranged, and the most populous in the universe; its streets and its squares, which are so large and so regular; its houses so clean and neat; its churches so magnificent; its hotels so superb; its courts so sumptuous; and its palaces so august; its bridges, its hospitals, its abbeys, and its monasteries so celebrated; one cannot deny that there is nothing equal to it on the earth. Then again, in regard to its wealth; not only the gold and silver which it contains, but the immense quantity of precious merchandise which daily—But I must go, really," he continued, suddenly remembering that some one was waiting for him—"I will finish what I was saying, and enlarge upon the subject another day."

"Pray Heaven he do not keep his word!" said the Benedictine, as the other left the room. "It is singular, is it not? that a man endowed with such fine and noble qualities, and who is himself what he believes all his countrymen to be, should, in spite of fine sense and delicate feeling, in other respects be so exquisitely tiresome. We all have our madness, that is beyond doubt; and his, though very tedious, is not an unamiable one."

Henry Masterton replied; but the conversation soon dropped on the part of the monk, and was not resumed. Since his last visit, the Benedictine had undergone one of those changes to which he was so often subject. He had seemed the morning before peculiarly cheerful and lively; but now all his mirth was gone, and he remained, during the greater part of the day, silent and gloomy. There seemed to be something weighing heavily upon his mind; and after the evening fell, when lights were brought into the chamber of the invalid, and fresh logs of wood were placed upon the blazing brands that already strewed the hearth, he fixed his eyes upon

the fire intensely, and sat for some time in the same attitude of gloomy thoughtfulness in which the young Cavalier had first seen him at the house of Monsieur de Vitray in the country. After a time the page was summoned away to supper; and almost immediately upon his departure, the Benedictine said abruptly, without however turning his eyes from their gaze upon the blazing embers, "I was remarking this morning that every one had his madness; now, my own is a strange one."

"And pray, what line may it take?" demanded Henry: "I fear me, a gloomy one."

"Gloomy, indeed!" replied the Benedictine, "but not more gloomy than my fate. However, you shall hear. Yet, as I speak, remember that I know it to be a madness: one of those vain and unreal fancies; those phantasms of the imagination which gain an undue power over the mind by being supported by extraordinary combinations of circumstances. Though I cannot divest my mind of the impression, yet it never influences my actions. It is this, then, the madness I speak of. At particular times, a deep and awful gloom seems to come upon me, which I can compare to nothing but a heavy thunder-cloud rolling over the sun in the midst of a summer's day. It hides and darkens every thing. I view every thing on earth in an evil aspect, and wo to the man that opposes me at that time! But this is not all. My imagination has become impressed with the idea that this cloud is always the forerunner, the harbinger, the prophetic shadow of some coming fate; and, as if to confirm me in the belief, circumstances have so fallen out as always to follow by something extraordinary those fits of preternatural gloom. Sometimes they are longer, sometimes more intense than at others; and, by their duration, I have, in a degree, learned to judge whether the circumstances that are to follow will be of the darkest or the lightest shade of misfortune; for always the deeper evil, the more profound sorrow follows the lengthened and heavy fit of sadness. In some degree,

too, I fancy I can divine the nature of the coming events; and though not always, I have found myself very often right. The night you arrived at the château of Monsieur de Vitray, some weeks ago," he continued, "a slight and almost momentary cloud passed over my mind; and I told my good old friend that something was going to take place."

"I hope that my coming," said Henry with a smile, "has not proved a misfortune to you, my good father. Certainly, the acquaintance then made has been of deep benefit to me; and unless you consider the loss of your valuable time, and the exercise of your kind benevolence, as great misfortunes, I do not see any that it has brought on you."

"None as yet, my son, certainly," replied the monk. "But still, your coming was an extraordinary event; and as I tell you, the fit was but slight, and for a moment. Very different is what I have felt all this day. A deep, solemn, awful shadow has been upon me, together with a conviction that my days are drawing towards a close. I have tried to shake it off—to banish it by reason, by occupation, by prayer; but in vain! A still, solemn, sad, and persevering voice seems ever repeating in my ear the word Death! I do not fear death! I should look upon it rather as a blessing! Why, therefore, if this be simply one of the horrors of the imagination, why not haunt me with something I do fear? Yet still it echoes Death! death! and I cannot but think that if death does soon overtake me, it will be accompanied by something more terrible than death alone. It will be fearful in the manner, or the accessories—I know not what to expect; but nothing would take me by surprise. If I were assailed this very night as I returned towards my convent, by the hands of men destined to take my life, it would be no surprise."

"If such be your feelings, father," replied Henry, "why not remain and pass the night here, as you have done till within these last two days?"

"No, no," replied the monk; "I am expected at the

convent; and, besides, I have business to transact to-morrow morning which will keep me away from you for the greater part of the day. No, I must go to-night."

"Then, at least, take with you two or three of the servants of Monsieur de Vitray," said the young Cavalier; "that can do no harm, and may do good."

"What good can it do, my son?" demanded the Benedictine. "If what I feel be the mere work of imagination, nothing can spring from it—it must end in nothing; and if it be the whispering voice of Fate, think you that all I can do will change the immutable purpose?—No, no, no!"

"I cannot believe that a warning would be given," replied Henry Masterton, "without some object; and I can see none, if we have not the power of avoiding that which we are warned against."

"May we not be warned to prepare ourselves for it?" asked the monk. "It is in vain, my son. Years, and months, and days of consideration have I given to this subject, and my mind is made up in regard to it. At first, I deemed as you do, and I took wonderful pains to avoid whatever I expected was to follow, when often, very often, the very methods I employed to avoid impending fate brought it upon my head; and of all the many bitter calamities that have befallen me—calamities the shadow of which invariably seemed to fall upon my mind beforehand—not one has there been which the most careful wisdom could have avoided. It is in vain, believe me, it is in vain that we fly from the slow hounds of Fate. They follow upon our track with unvarying certainty, double and turn however we will. It matters not—perchance it may not be to-day, nor to-morrow, nor this week, nor the next; but come it will, and come when it may, and how it may, I am prepared for it."

"And yet, my good father," replied Henry Masterton, "you set out by saying that you knew it all to be but a dream of the imagination. Let me beseech you

to banish such thoughts, or if there be any real danger which menaces you, take measures against it."

"I said that I knew it to be but a dream of imagination," replied the monk, "for as such alone is it cognizable to the calm eye of Reason. If I pause and think over it, such is the only conclusion I can form, and that it is but a vision of the fancy, supported by strange coincidences; but still are there not things of whose existence we are certain, yet which are not tangible to human reason?—Are there not many such? I ask you.—Nobody that owns a God, or whose mind is not of that foul and grovelling kind which limits all its notions to the low earth which is its present dwelling-place, can doubt that there are; and, amid all the wild, dim mysteries of our obscure being, may there not be some communication between the spirit imprisoned in this clay, and beings that we see not in the air around us?"

To Henry Masterton, the feelings of the monk—notwithstanding his own nature being highly imaginative—seemed little less than madness; and, indeed, he had been led to think, from many casual circumstances in his commune with the Benedictine, that the constant struggle between strong passions and high moral principles had, on some few points, disordered an intellect of the first order. It seemed as if, in the combat between reason and passion, reason had indeed conquered, but had received a wound which rendered the victory insecure. He ceased, therefore, to combat by argument ideas which rejected the same mode of examination that other opinions admitted, and gradually turned the subject into another channel, hoping that a few days, or perhaps hours, might remove the fit of gloom that had fallen upon his companion.

The Benedictine, however, did not seem pleased with the change of subject from that on which his mind was now painfully fixed; and, after a few words of common conversation, he rose and left the invalid for the night, telling him that it would be late the fol-

lowing day before he could return. With this information the young Cavalier was not displeased, as it was his fixed determination to visit his brother the next morning, though still but feeble from his long sickness; and in this design he did not wish to encounter opposition.

His page returned almost as the Benedictine left him, and immediately recommenced the tale which had before been interrupted. Some words, it appeared, which the boy had heard pass between the monk and several gentlemen in the court had given him a suspicion that the Benedictine himself knew more of the young Lord Masterton than he acknowledged; and he had during the morning dogged his steps to a house in the Rue des Minimes, which proved to be exactly opposite to that in which the young English nobleman had fixed his abode. The boy, with all the dexterous shrewdness which he had acquired among scenes of danger and difficulty, crept instantly under an archway hard by, and waited for some time, till he saw his master's brother issue forth on horseback, followed by several armed servants. When he had ridden on, a porter still appeared standing at the gate of the hotel, and in a few minutes after the Benedictine came forth, crossed over the street, and walking leisurely forward, as if pursuing his way, passed the man at the door, gave him his *benedicite*, and spoke with him a few words, as if casually. The porter replied, and the monk passed on, as if satisfied, while the boy, issuing from the archway where he watched, proceeded to ask his way to the merchant's on whom his master's bills were drawn.

Henry smiled at his page's narrative; but in the conduct of the monk he saw nothing but the tortuous and cunning method which the children of the Romish church pursued to obtain the information of which they were so covetous. "The straightforward way," he thought, "would have been to have called at my brother's door, and letting him know that I was in the same town with himself, to have demanded tidings of

his health and his concerns, on my account; but that would not suit the Jesuit, and he must gain all the news he intended to tell me of my brother, by this crooked and circuitous means."

Such were the thoughts that passed through the mind of the young Cavalier; but the page, in whom suspicion had grown habitual by mingling among men, and among events where candour and frankness were continually encountered by cunning and deceit, could not but believe that the monk had some private motives of his own for the conduct he pursued. Indeed, to him the Benedictine had always been an object of curious suspicion and unsatisfactory contemplation. He had seen him before, he felt sure, but, notwithstanding his extraordinary powers of recollecting those whom he had once beheld, he could not recall precisely where he had met him, or under what character; and long and eagerly did he often watch the countenance of the monk, catching occasional glances, which seemed to lead memory to the very brink of certainty, when suddenly they would pass away, and leave all as dim and obscure as at first.

He loved him not, perhaps from the very angry disappointment that he felt at the first instance of his shrewd remembrance ever failing him; but still there was a sort of commanding dignity in the monk's demeanour which taught the boy to obey, during his master's sickness, in spite of undefined doubts and positive dislike.

CHAPTER XII.

The morning was as cold and unfavourable as well could be conceived for an invalid first to venture forth; and as Henry Masterton quitted the house of Monsieur de Vitray to seek the dwelling of his brother, a cold

shudder passed over his whole frame. The sky was covered with clouds, the wind was easterly; round all the principal shops and booths the canvass screens and blinds were drawn close, to exclude the dust and the cold air, and nothing looked brisk or cheerful in the whole city but the charcoal fires of those who sold roasted chestnuts at the corners of the streets.

A great city in a cold day is a melancholy sight in itself, and although the heart of the young Cavalier was one not easily depressed, yet there was a sufficient portion of uncertainty—that most cheerless of all things—in his own situation, to render him not a little sad as he walked onward through the town. Memory, also, was painful to him, when he remembered the scenes in which he himself and the brother he was about to seek had last met; when he compared the past with the present, and thought of the ruin of his house and the dispersion of his family. Corporeal weakness too oppressed him; and he felt, for the first time in his life, what a load the body can be to the mind, how it can weaken its energies, crush its enjoyments, and depress its hopes.

The task which he was going to fulfil had many painful points also. Much must inevitably pass between his brother and himself that would be bitter enough to both; and though he had determined to abstain, as far as possible, both from retrospections and explanations, he felt that both in his own bosom and that of Lord Masterton there would be a silent voice which would speak all the sorrowful things that their lips refused to utter.

We take the resolution of doing a particular thing, and we view it, as we think, under every aspect; we consider all the points and bearings of the undertaking, and we satisfy ourselves of the easiness of the task: but as we approach towards the moment of execution, how many unforeseen difficulties, unexpected obstacles, and new points of view rise up before the magic wand of reflection. Thus, as the young Cavalier proceeded on his way, a crowd of considerations rose to his mind

which had not before suggested themselves. Was he about to meet Lady Eleanor Fleming, he asked himself, and if so, what must be his conduct? If his brother asked where Emily Langleigh was, and under whose protection, what could he reply? and if he demanded what authority he had from her to seek the dissolution of their engagement, what had he to produce?

He had marked upon a plan of Paris before he set out, the route he was to follow, in aid of the memory of his little page, on whose shoulder he leaned; but as these thoughts thronged thick and fast upon his mind, he turned into a street detached from the line he was pursuing, in order to think over his conduct beforehand. By the time he had walked on to the end, however, he had determined upon doing what perhaps is the best policy on all occasions, where a man's guide is honour, and his support integrity,—namely, to let his conduct take birth in the circumstances as they arose; and he turned to proceed on his way.

Setting out fully two hours before the time at which little Ball-o'-fire had seen his brother leave home the day before, he doubted not that he should reach his house before he had quitted his dwelling. He remarked, however, that there was an extraordinary silence and emptiness in the streets, and on inquiring of an artisan, he found that an attack had been made in the morning on the Fauxbourg St. Germain, and that every one attached to the party of the Fronde had been summoned, in the king's name, to repulse the king's forces.

Knowing that his brother had cast himself into that party, he hesitated for a moment in regard to whether he should proceed; but at length, as he had already risked the cold air after his confinement, he resolved to go on, and ascertain, at all events, whether he were gone forth or not. A few minutes now brought him to the *Rue des Minimes*, at the far end of which he caught a glance of a small body of cavalry, galloping at full speed out on the other side towards the Place Royale. The house in which his brother dwelt was then pointed

out to him by the boy. It was situated on the opposite side of the street, and seemed a large but ancient hotel, with a *porte-cochère* and a court within itself, and over the gateway appeared, carved in stone, the armorial bearing of some noble family, who probably were either by that time lost altogether in the stream of time, or, like the blazonry that proclaimed what they had been, were mouldering fast to decay.

Without pausing to trouble himself with any further reflections, Henry Masterton crossed over the street, and tried to push open the gates, which offered no means of making his desire to enter heard by those within. The wooden valves, however, were fastened on the other side, and resisted his efforts, so that he was obliged to have recourse to the hilt of his sword, with which he struck several loud blows, and then waited for an answer, but waited in vain. Again and again he repeated the summons, till the vacant street echoed with the sound; but nobody seemed likely to attend to the call, when an old man, crossing from the other side of the way, asked why he did not go round to the back entrance, which, he said, was most generally used.

The young Cavalier informed himself where it was, and was about to proceed thither, when he heard some one begin slowly to unbar the gate, and a female servant appeared, demanding what he wanted.

"I have knocked till I am tired, my good woman," he replied, "and want to see Lord Masterton. Is he at home?"

"I know nothing about him," replied the woman sulkily; "I belong to Madame de Valbrun de Milaret, who has the lower story, and I know nothing about the English milor, except that his porter, whose business it is to open the gate, is always out of the way when he should be in it, and if I were to come when everybody knocks, I should have nothing to do but to do his work for him—an idle strolling vagabond!"

"But cannot you inquire for me," said Henry, "whether Lord Masterton is at home? If he be, say that it is his brother who wants to see him."

"I cannot go away and leave our own place without any one," replied the woman in a tone rendered somewhat more civil by hearing the rank of the person with whom she spoke; "but if you be his brother, sir, you had better just walk on across the court, and in at the large door in the corps de logis you will most likely find some of his idle lacqueys at the top of the great staircase. They heard you knocking, I warrant, but did not choose to come. However, if you do not see any one of them, you can but walk on into the saloon, and if you be his brother, of course you will be welcome; many a one takes greater liberties who is no brother at all."

Henry thanked her for her advice, and proceeded to follow it by crossing the court towards a large door, which entered from a flight of stone steps in the main body of the building. This door was not absolutely open, but it was not absolutely shut, and the young Cavalier easily effected his entrance into a large paved vestibule, lighted by four windows, ornamented by rich worked cornices, and displaying on the stained and blistered walls, and in the broken arabesques of the architecture, a thousand traces of pomp and splendour falling to rapid decay. A large leathern chair stood by the side of the fireplace, but the chair was vacant, and the dull white embers, with here and there a red spot, showing that all was not quite extinct, evinced that no careful hand had been employed in supplying fuel for some time.

At either end of the vestibule appeared a broad flight of steps, leading to the chambers above, and Henry was in some doubt which he should choose, but the stone steps of one being covered with some matting, that indication of man's care seemed to imply that there was the more frequented side of the house, and he accordingly began to mount the steps slowly, fatigued and faint with the unwonted exertion of so long a walk. When he was about half-way up, he heard a distant door bang to, and while the sound echoed emptily through the whole building, he paused to listen for any

footfalls that might follow, but all was silent, and concluding that it was the wind which had closed some open door, he proceeded.

At the top of the staircase was another smaller vestibule, with several doors around it; and here again he paused, puzzled which he should take. The ante-room in which he stood bore evidence of far more attention than any part of the house he had hitherto seen. It was tapestried all round, and besides several embroidered seats and a richly carved cabinet of oak, one or two fine pictures of a small size were fixed against the walls.

Had the young Cavalier felt certain that his brother was alone in Paris, as he had been told, he would have experienced no difficulty, but would have entered the first door he found; but there was in his bosom an obstinate conviction that the unhappy connexion into which Lord Masterton had fallen could not be broken off already, which made him hesitate; for whatever liberty he would have taken with Frank, he would not for much have burst rudely and unannounced into the presence of Lady Eleanor Fleming. The mingled feeling of condemnation and pity which he experienced towards her, the pain which he knew she must feel on seeing him, made him even more scrupulous—perhaps it might be said more tender, in regard to wounding her by any appearance of disrespect, than he would have been in his conduct towards a more virtuous woman; and he hesitated long before he laid his hand upon the lock. At length, choosing that which, from some of the slight marks that strike the eye but escape description, he judged to be the room of public reception, he opened the door, and entered a large and splendid saloon, furnished in the same taste as the ante-chamber, with old but rich hangings, pictures, and embroidery. Two tables of marble stood at either extremity of the room; and the chairs ranged regularly round the walls, the fireless state of the hearth, and the open windows told that, though it was perhaps occasionally used in moments of importance, it was not

habitually tenanted by the dwellers in the mansion. Various objects of a very different character, however, were spread out upon the tables, and finding no one there, Henry approached the one next to him, and proceeded to examine the things that were strewed upon it, in search of the implements for writing. The first thing that met his eyes was the sword which his brother had worn on the morning appointed for his marriage; and beside it lay a bloody glove, a token of the scenes of strife in which he had lately mingled. A thousand other things, well remembered, lay about, marking a number of incidents in the past, and calling up in the midst of a tumultuous city the calm, sweet scenes of his native country, and his early years, dreams of happiness that were past, and moments of simplicity that could never return. The young Cavalier let his eye rest upon them one after another, and the days gone by returned. It is alone when we stand on a lofty station, and in looking back upon the past, behold the whole track we have traversed far below us —when we see obstacles overcome, and stumbling-blocks removed, and gulfs past, and the height climbed, that we can find pure joy in contemplating minutely the space over which we have travelled in the journey of life. But Henry Masterton stood a poor exile in a foreign land, with a noble father lying in a bloody grave, and a brother whose fine qualities might have dignified the highest station debased by a connexion that was worse than death; his native land prohibited to his footsteps, and his true inheritance devoured by strangers. With such a present, and a doubtful future, however sweet might be the scenes of the past, there was to his eyes a shadow over them all—however delightful the moments he recalled might have been in their passage, the retrospect of yesterday was painful, from the bitter contrast of to-day. The irrepressible tears sprang in his eyes as he raised a ring, cut from a precious stone that had been found on the shores of the sea by which he was born, and which, as he remembered well, had given rise to many a search along

the beach for others like it, in the weariless and hopeful days of infancy; and drawing towards him an ink-glass and a port-folio of paper, he sat down to write to his brother such a letter as his heart might dictate under such reflections.

"Go out, my boy," he said, addressing the page, who had followed him; "go out by that door, and see if you can discover some one in the house who can give me tidings of my brother. He must surely have left somebody behind him, and you can enter where I should feel afraid to intrude."

The boy obeyed with speed, for there was nothing on earth he hated more than standing still; and during his master's recovery he had been fatigued to death with three weeks of inactivity. No sooner was he gone than Henry heard door after door open and shut through the house with extraordinary rapidity, and he began almost to regret, as he remembered little Ball-o'-fire's reckless boldness, that he had sent him upon an errand which he had not chosen to execute himself. The thought troubled him, and he had some difficulty in commencing his letter; but as he went on, the light gay step of the page running heedlessly here and there through many an empty room and corridor, embarrassed him more, and he laid down the pen to listen. At length the sounds ceased, and he proceeded; but it was with difficulty that he satisfied himself. Now he thought his letter cold and restrained, and he would not have had it so for worlds; and then he deemed what he had written not too kind, but too humble in its tone, and feeling that in demanding the relinquishment of Emily's hand he sought a right and not a concession, he tore the paper, and was about to begin another, when suddenly the tapestry on the side of the room opposite the windows began to move. "Here is some one at length," he thought; but the moment after the hangings were turned back from a door behind, and he again saw his page apparently returning from his search.

"Well, what news?" demanded the young Cavalier; "have you found no one?"

"There is no one in this wing," answered the boy; "but I hear somebody moving at the end of the long corridor that leads behind the state-rooms to the opposite wing."

Whether it was that he stood in the shadow, or that he was really alarmed at something—unusual as it was for him to be alarmed at any thing—Henry thought that he perceived an uncommon paleness on his countenance.

"What is the matter?" he asked: "why did you not go on, and see who it was you heard?"

"Because," replied the boy, "I heard a low wailing as if there was a woman dying there, or in deadly pain. I have seen many a man die, and hope I shall see many more, but I never saw but one woman die; and it was a sight I did not love. Hark!" he added, "I hear it even here. Do not you?"

Henry rose and advanced to the door where the boy stood, but his ears were not so practised in catching every sound as those of the page, and he heard nothing.

"Come forward hither," said the lad, as he saw that his master had not yet caught the wailing that he mentioned—"come forward hither to the end of this passage, and you will soon hear."

Henry followed immediately to a door, which opened from the large half-furnished eating-room, which flanked the saloon, out into a long dim passage beyond; and, as he did so, heard more and more distinctly a low murmuring sound, between a groan and a cry, which rose occasionally over the voice of some one else speaking with quick and noisy utterance.

The young Cavalier paused not a moment, but advanced along the corridor as quickly as possible. At every step it became more and more clear that the chambers to which he was proceeding were occupied by some one in excessive anguish; and it was evident that both the voices he heard were those of women. At length he caught distinct words, spoken in English.

"For God's sake take a little, madam—the doctor will be here directly—Jacques is gone to see for my lord—but if you would but take a little—oh dear, oh dear! what shall I do?—she is dying, that she is—pray, my lady, take some of the essence—surely there's a step—it's the apothecary, surely!" And at the same moment as Henry approached the door from which the sound issued, it was thrown wide open.

He entered without hesitation, but the sight that he saw when he did so, made him pause almost upon the threshold. The room in which he found himself was the same elegant saloon described in a former chapter, and filled with all the various implements of female occupation or amusement. The chamber, however, he scarcely beheld, for it was on the form of the fair and faulty Lady Eleanor Fleming that all his attention became instantly fixed. She was apparently in the agonies of death; and in her still lovely countenance there was that dreadful and prophetic collapsing of the features which seldom, if ever, fails to announce the tomb. Her long dark silky hair, freed from comb and pin, hung nearly to her feet, and fell in part dishevelled on her bosom, as, in the writhing agonies under which she seemed to have suffered, she had slipped from the couch on which she had been lying, and now lay half-prostrate on the ground, and half-supported against the side of the ottoman. Her head was bent partly forward on her bosom, by the edge of the couch against which she leaned, and upon which her left arm still remained, with the fingers convulsively grasping the cushions, while the right, which had fallen to the ground, held fast in its hand the remains of a drinking-cup, which had been broken as her fingers had struck against the floor. The beautiful and speaking eyes that, in former days, seemed full of the fire of empire and command were now closed, but the long, long black lashes by which they were fringed lay arched in profuse loveliness upon her marble cheek, from which every shade of the rose had vanished. The soft chiselling of her mouth, too, remained unaltered, but the lips were

deadly pale; and, half-open, showed the pearly teeth within firm set, as if to stay the deadly groans that broke from her agonized bosom.

Those groans were becoming less frequent as Henry Masterton entered, but still they—as well as a fearful shudder which occasionally shook her whole frame—told that she yet lived, though it was evident that the soul was hovering at the portals of another world. By her side was a female attendant, whom Henry well remembered to have seen at Penford-bourne; and who now held a crucifix and a bottle of essence alternately to her lady's lips. Having returned to her mistress the moment she opened the door of the chamber, without remarking to whom it was she gave entrance, she addressed the young Cavalier as a physician, and begged, in French, his instant assistance, for that her lady had taken poison.

"Nay, nay! I trust in Heaven you are mistaken," exclaimed Henry, in English. "What makes you think she has committed such a fearful act?"

The woman started up with a half-uttered scream as she heard his voice.

"Gracious Heaven!" she exclaimed, "is it you, sir? You have come at a terrible moment, but for God's sake, render my poor lady some aid, for she is dying. She has lived here alone, and shut out from all the world, till she has become full of dismal fancies, and having parted with my lord about an hour ago, in some unkindness, I fear she has taken poison. Do you not see the cup still in her hand?"

Henry, though but little skilled in leech-craft, eagerly afforded every assistance he could. He raised the unhappy lady from the floor to the couch, and he bathed her temples with essences from her toilet; he sprinkled cold water on her face, and did all that kindness, devoid of skill, could do to restore her. His efforts had some effect, and she was beginning already to show signs of returning consciousness, when the apothecary, who had been sent for, entered the room.

His first proceeding was to examine some drops that

still remained in the broken cup; and as he did so he shook his head with melancholy meaning.

"How long has it been taken?" he demanded.

"I cannot tell to a minute," replied the woman, in miserable French, "but nearly an hour, I dare say."

"Then it is quite useless to do any thing," said the man of medicines, laying down again the fair beautiful hand he had raised to feel the pulse. "There is no antidote on earth could save her now."

"But, at least, make the effort," exclaimed Henry. "Do not let her die without aid. She was already reviving when you entered the room."

"Doubtless! doubtless!" replied the apothecary. "She may yet live some hours. She has only fainted from excess of agony, and the longer she remains insensible perhaps the better, for what were the use of recalling her again to consciousness, when that consciousness implies torture?"

"We are taught to hope," answered Henry, "that repentance, however tardy, if it be sincere, may find pardon in heaven. Give her then, in God's name, the means of repentance, and let her not pass away to another world without an interval between a passionate act of sin and her irrevocable doom. Besides, sir, the lady is a Roman Catholic, and—"

"The priests must have their dues," interrupted the apothecary, with a sneer. "Well, well, sir, we will soon restore her to consciousness, though I doubt whether she will thank us for it. Perhaps, indeed," he added, "internal mortification may have already begun, and then the pain will, of course, be less."

He now applied himself with skill and perseverance to recall Lady Eleanor to recollection, and gradually succeeded in doing so. A few deep-drawn sighs and convulsive sobs were the first symptoms of returning sensation; and in a moment after, the cup, which she had still continued to hold with a close grasp, fell from her hand, and was dashed to pieces on the floor.

"Oh, how I wish I had broken you to pieces long ago!" cried the woman, addressing the cup.—"I have seen it standing in that cabinet, sir," she continued,

speaking to Henry, "for three or four days; and I do not know why my heart misgave me; but I had a great mind, more than once, to throw away what was in it, and put fair water in its stead; and now that it is too late, I wish to Heaven I had done it."

"Here! cease your babbling, my good woman, and attend to your mistress," said the apothecary; "she is coming to herself. Pour these drops into her mouth."

Almost as he spoke Lady Eleanor opened her eyes; but they were heavy still, and full of death, nor did she seem for some moments sensible to what was passing round her. "Is it all over?" she muttered to herself; "is it all over?" But in less than a minute she began to look faintly round, first turning her eyes upon her faithful attendant, and then upon the apothecary, and seeming at each glance to become more and more conscious of her situation. At length her look fell upon Henry Masterton, as he stood near her feet, and she gazed fixedly upon him for a moment or two, as if she did not recollect him; but the next instant, she raised herself upon her arm to see him better, the whole blood, which seemed previously to have been gathered to her heart, rushed at once into her face, and covering her eyes with her hands, she sank back upon her couch.

Henry was embarrassed and distressed; but his was not a mind to remember one angry feeling towards a dying woman, and after pausing for an instant, considering what to do, he did as his heart directed, and approaching close to the fair unhappy being before him, he said in a low voice, "I hope you are better, lady! I hope you do not suffer as you seemed to do but now!"

Lady Eleanor replied nothing, and turned away her head; but it was painful shame, not anger, appeared to move her, and even as she did so she let her hand fall gently upon his, as if in reply to the kind words he spoke.

"Nay, nay, dear lady, be composed," said Henry; "it is a friend who speaks to you; one who wishes, and has always wished you well."

"Oh, Master Harry," she replied, in a faint, changed

voice, as if it came from the dead; "I do believe you always did wish me well, and had your will been followed, I should not have now blushed to see you. I should not have been lying the despised and miserable creature that I am—I should not—O God! I should not have been hastening, even now, to another and an awful world, by my own rash act."

"But do you not feel yourself better, lady?" he asked, anxiously. "May we not hope that there was not enough of the poison to—"

"Hope nothing, Harry Masterton; hope nothing," she replied; "but that it may soon be over. I am dying—the great agony, indeed, is past; but I feel death upon me—in every fibre—in every limb. And yet, I would rather it was so," she added, turning wildly round towards him. "I would rather pass that dreadful porch whose passage admits of no return—were it even now in my power to change. I would rather still hurry on, than hear him speak such cold and chilling words again."

"Hear whom speak such words?" demanded Henry, judging from the wildness of her eyes that her mind began in a degree to wander.

"Him, him!" she replied. "Hear him, who does not even come to soothe my dying bed! O God! O God! not from him did I deserve this!" And she burst into a terrible fit of tears.

"O think of other things, lady," said Henry. "You say that you are dying, Lady Eleanor. If it be so,—and who shall say it is not?—think of what it is to die, and while there is yet time, open for yourself the path of hope. You have cast from you the world; cast from you, too, all that is sinful in it; and strive by deep repentance for the whole to win pardon yet."

"Hope!" she exclaimed. "What have I to hope? Have I not, for his love, cast from me all hope in this world? Have I not, from his unkindness, cast from me all hope in another? Gracious God!" she added, clasping her hands, as the thoughts of the dying came over her mind. "Gracious God! whither am I going?

What am I to become? O that I could see for one moment beyond! And wilt thine ear be closed against those who fly unbidden to thy presence? Has thy mercy no store for those who leave the station in which thou hast placed them? Is there no hope for those that die presumptuously?"

"There is hope for all that repent, lady," replied Henry. "Yes, yes, indeed, believe it! It is promised in the book of truth. It is promised in the word of God himself. Let me, lady, let me seek for you some one of your own creed, who can aid you in this dreadful moment. I am no priest; and all I know is, that redemption is promised to all who believe and repent. Let me seek some one who is fitted by knowledge and profession to lead you to repentance and salvation."

"Do, do!" she replied; "do so quickly, for I feel that the time is but short. Oh, Harry Masterton, you would have stayed me from evil, if I had listened to your voice, and now you give me hope in the misery which that evil has brought upon me. My blessing were a sinful one, but God will bless you, whatever becomes of me."

"Who is your lady's confessor?" demanded Henry, quickly turning to the attendant, "and where does he live?"

"Alas! sir," replied the woman, who stood by in tears, "she has seen none for several months."

"Well, I will soon find one," replied the young Cavalier, advancing towards the door.

"Go to the convent at the corner of the opposite street," said the apothecary. "The good Capuchins will soon send you a priest from among them, for the small sum of a silver crown; which, by-the-way, is just my fee for coming here this morning." And he rose also to depart.

Henry glanced at him from head to foot, with an eye of bitter contempt, for that callous insensibility which men are too apt to acquire by constant familiarity with pain and death, and throwing him the sordid piece of money that he claimed, he left the room to seek as speedily as possible, for a priest.

CHAPTER XIII.

As Henry Masterton left the chamber of Lady Eleanor Fleming, he beheld, standing half-way up the long corridor into which it opened, the figure of his page, little Ball-o'-fire, and then for the first time perceived that, notwithstanding the dreadful scenes of death and misery in which the boy had been in fact born and brought up, his aversion to see suffering in a woman was so great, that he had hung back instead of following close on his footsteps as he was wont to do.

"Is the lady dead?" he asked, coming close to his master; "for I do not hear her groans any more."

"No, no, she is not dead," replied the young Cavalier. "But which is the way out, my boy? I am in haste."

"Then the shortest way is down this back staircase," answered the page; "I have found out a door at the bottom of it, which leads into a street behind that by which we came in."

Henry followed instantly, and in a few minutes was in the *Rue du Foin.* He paused for a moment ere he shut the door behind him, to mark the house well, and then turned to seek the convent the apothecary had mentioned, and which he concluded to be the nearest place where he could procure any person qualified to receive the confession of the dying woman, and administer to her the consolations of religion. At the far end of the street, however, as he entered it from the house, he saw two men on foot, one of whom was attached to the church. This was evident by the different form of his dress from that of the common habit of the day, though at the distance of the street the young Cavalier could not distinguish whether he was one of the regular parochial clergy, or merely a member of some re-

ligious order. His own bodily weakness and his late indisposition were entirely forgotten in the painful interest he felt in the scene he had just left; and speeding forward against the cold wind, he endeavoured to overtake the priest and his companion, who were walking slowly on in deep conversation.

Henry easily gained upon them, but as he did so he saw that the subject on which they spoke affected them deeply, for, though they displayed none of those quick and eager gesticulations with which the French in general give point and application to their lightest words, the speakers would suddenly stand still and gaze upon each other's faces for a moment, and then move on again, sometimes the one laying his hand slowly and firmly upon the arm of the other, and sometimes drawing back, each from his neighbour, as if their commune was not of the most amicable kind. As he came nearer too, he saw by the black robe and cowl that the one nearest to the wall was a monk, while the fashion of the other's dress, the principal article of which was a buff coat slashed with silk and trimmed with lace, induced him to set him down for an Englishman. Neither was the figure totally unknown to him, and for a moment he asked himself, could it be his brother? and yet surely, he thought, his brother would bear about him some deeper signs of mourning for his father's death.

He paused not on his way, however, and as he came nearer still, the fancy that it could be his brother vanished, for the stranger was a less powerful man in every respect than Frank Masterton, and the page immediately gave his suspicion its right direction, by springing to his side and whispering the two words, "Walter Dixon!" The parliamentarian was deep in conversation with the monk, and it was evident that he was trying to convince him of some truth by deep and solemn asseveration. He held his arm, he laid his hand upon his heart, he raised his look to heaven, while the monk walked on with his arm raised and bent as if he were grasping his brow with his hand in deep

thought. His hood was over his head, so that Henry could not catch any mark whereby to recognise him, but turning suddenly at the very end of the street, when the young Cavalier was within a few yards of them, he exposed to his view the features of the Benedictine Dom André. His hand was pressed upon his forehead, his ear was bent, listening to the words which the other eagerly poured into it; and while he did so, his teeth were fixed in his nether lip, as if in the effort to master some deep emotions within. He walked on straight towards the young Cavalier without seeming to see any thing before him.

Not so Walter Dixon, however, whose eye roved about continually, in spite of the eagerness with which he was speaking; and immediately that he and his companion turned, his glance fell upon Henry Masterton. "Here is his brother," he exclaimed instantly: "I must leave you." And at the same moment he sprang across the street, passed round the opposite corner, and was out of sight.

The Benedictine stood as one confounded when he beheld Henry Masterton: but it seemed to originate as much in the sudden mingling of a different current of thought, arising in his unexpected appearance, with the ideas which had been flowing in the monk's mind previously, as in the surprise at seeing him abroad, when he had left him confined to a sick chamber at home.

"You here!" he exclaimed; "you here at a moment like this? Good God! what do you here?"

"I will explain all that hereafter, my good father," replied the young Cavalier rapidly; "at present I must claim your immediate aid as a minister of religion for an unfortunate fellow-creature lying at the point of death, who demands to confess her sins, and receive such comfort as nothing but religion can bestow."

"I am unfit, my son, I am unfit," replied the monk wildly; "I, across whose brain but now thoughts were flashing like the devouring lightning over the black void of night!—thoughts that I dread to recall!—I go and

prate of consolation to another! But send to the Cordeliers, or to Notre Dame—send—send to—"

"It cannot be, good father," replied Henry Masterton: "recollect, for Heaven's sake, your character, your profession, your Christian charity. The lady for whom I call you has taken poison!—her soul is oppressed with sin and fear—the gates of the tomb are open before her. Ere I can find another priest, perhaps the hour may be past, and the eternal seal set upon a life of transgression!—Can you, will you refuse?"

"No, no, my son!" replied the monk: "one moment let me pause—let me think—let me become myself, for I have heard those things this day that have shaken my inmost soul. Now, now," he added, after an instant's thought, "now lead on, I will follow."

Henry now led the way with a step of light, and the monk followed, muttering to himself, "'Thou shalt not shed blood;'—'if they smite thee on one cheek, smite not again, but turn thou the other, that they may smite thee on that also:'—'do good to those that despitefully use thee.' Ha!" he continued, as Henry stopped at the door of his brother's dwelling, "ha! dost thou bring me here? Who told thee this?—who led thee hither?"

"Father, there is no time for question and reply," answered the young Cavalier; "death will tarry for no appeal, and the summons of death was strong upon the lady when I left her: enter, then, in Heaven's name! and I beseech thee do thy best to save a soul in the present dreadful hour!"

"And is it even so? Oh God! oh God! that it should be thus!" exclaimed the monk: "but I will, I will, my son; and now Heaven aid me!" So saying, he drew the hood still farther over his head, and entered the door, which was opened by the only servant Henry had yet seen.

"Has your lord returned?" demanded the young Cavalier, as he passed in after the monk; "and how is the lady now?"

The woman shook her head. "She seems sinking fast, sir," she replied; "nor has my lord returned, though both the men that he left are gone to seek him."

"I will wait for him, then, in the great saloon," said Henry. "Conduct the holy father to your lady, and let me know when he comes forth."

Henry turned along the corridor with his page to the great saloon in which he had first paused, and there, striding up and down the apartment, he waited the long, long minutes of painful suspense—suspense not in regard to the event, but in regard to when that event was to happen.

The monk followed the attendant straight forward till she opened the door of the saloon in which the unhappy lady lay. There he paused for a moment, leaning his hand against the lintel of the door, and looking anxiously forward. What passed on his countenance could not be seen under the shadow of his cowl, but his footsteps wavered as he advanced; and after he had sat down by the side of the couch on which she was placed, he said nothing for several minutes. Lady Eleanor lay motionless: her arm was cast across her eyes—the paleness of death was on her lips and cheeks, and it was only by the rise and fall of her bosom, and occasionally a low murmur of distress, that it could be distinguished she yet lived. The monk's eyes seemed fixed upon her, and, after a long pause, he said, "Be comforted, my daughter. Woman, leave the room," he added, turning to the attendant, who immediately obeyed. "And now," he continued, still speaking in French, "have you nothing to say? Do you not seek to relieve your heart of the heavy load which lies upon that of every human being, and weighs it down in the moment of the spirit's departure?"

"I do, I do indeed," said Lady Eleanor, faintly withdrawing her arm from before her eyes, and letting it fall heavily by her side; "but oh! good father, is there, is there mercy in heaven for sins such as mine!"

"When they are confessed and repented, there is

mercy for all," replied the Benedictine: "speak, then, while there is yet time."

"I am faint," she said; "give me that cup, father; it yielded me strength but now."

The monk gave her some of a restorative which the apothecary had left, and when she had moistened her lips, she continued—

"I must be short in my tale, for my time, I find, is to be short. I am an Englishwoman, father; my mother died early, and I was left to the charge of a parent who considered little else but his own interests, and my education was intrusted to others, who taught me well those idle graces and weak accomplishments which might win admiration from creatures like myself, but few of those principles which might secure my own esteem and keep me in the way of heaven. They did worse—they taught me to believe those graces and accomplishments the only things of value on the earth. Was not that a deadly sin, father?"

"The sins of the dead are on their own head, my daughter," replied the monk: "speak of yourself; we have all enough to answer for ourselves."

"Too true," rejoined the dying woman. "Well did I profit by those lessons, and I learned to admire myself as the most beautiful thing on earth. That was my first great sin; but still I thought that there was something more to be adorned than the person; and while my father spent his years at the court, I strove to enrich my mind with every thing that was *brilliant* or *fine* in the writings of the past or the present. That which was *good*, perhaps, I cast away. My father's fortunes were soon made, and to our own inheritance he added the estates of the Lord Langleigh, who was, I fear me, basely betrayed. His ambition was then satisfied, and his avarice narrowing itself to simple accumulation, he left the court, and, residing at Penfordbourne, gave himself up to the increasing of his wealth. I was now of an age to wed, and though we saw few persons in our own dwelling who might aspire to match with me, yet in our visits round we met many such,

and I soon learned the pleasure of being loved and admired; but my heart seemed of ice itself, and I felt that though I would have given my hand to any one my father pointed out, all were to me as indifferent as strangers. Not that I did not seek to make them love me: I lived upon their adoration; and if there had been one man in all the country whom I knew, and who dared to pay attention to another when I was present, I would have exhausted all the artifices of human vanity but I would have brought him to my feet. And, oh! how I scorned them when I saw them there, those proud lords of the creation!—how I laughed to see the agonies of their passion, and how little did I know how deeply I might feel it myself! All this, I know, was sinful; but there was worse to come. The only being who was much admitted to our dwelling was a young man about six years older than myself—a nephew of my father—my own cousin, but a demon of cunning, and pride, and revenge. He was constantly there, always by my side, flattering my vanity, feeding my pride, rendering me small services, and whispering sweet words—"

"And you loved him!" exclaimed the Benedictine sharply, "and you loved him!"

"No, no, no, father!" replied the lady, seeming to acquire energy and strength for the denial: "no, I despised him: however, he was always there, and he won my father's ear. His own mean parents were enriching themselves by petty means, and pretended to greater wealth than they really had. If I wedded my equal in rank and fortune, my father knew that he would have had to dower his daughter with a splendid portion, while Walter Dixon offered to receive me portionless. That argument was sufficient, and my father promised him my hand. I cared not, and was all obedience, doubting not that, for his own sake, my future husband would leave me to pursue my own path after our marriage as much as I had done before. He left the house, to communicate the tidings to his parents, and scarcely was he gone a day, when two strangers arrived, bearing

letters to my father. They were both elegant and handsome men, though much older than myself, and of course I took care to strive for both their hearts. The one, however, I soon found, had been a soldier, but was now a priest, a Jesuit, called Du Tillet; the other was an English gentleman of splendid fortune and high accomplishments, by name Sir Andrew Fleming. He had travelled long, distinguished himself, vacillated between many a profession—the robe, the gown and the sword; but at length yielded all to passion, and before he had been five days at Penfordbourne, he offered his hand to the daughter of his host."

The monk sat deeply silent while she spoke, and even his hands he had drawn within his robe, as if what was passing in his mind might have been read by the working of the muscles. The lady, however, now paused, and from weakness, fatigue, and mental pain, a dreadful fit of convulsive sobbing seized her, which had nearly terminated her existence. The monk called no one to his assistance, but raised her up and held the cup to her lips while she strove to drink. At first she could not swallow the liquid that it contained, but at length she succeeded, the sobbing gradually ceased, and after a few moments of silence she went on. "It is fleeting fast, father, it is fleeting fast, and he does not come to me, for whom I have sacrificed all virtue, and peace, and hope, and life."

"Who, who?" demanded the monk; "for whom have you done all this?"

"For the only one I ever loved," she replied: "but you shall hear—I will be quick—I must be quick. My father told Sir Andrew Fleming of the tie that bound me to another; but in the eagerness of passion, and with the sinful reasoning of Du Tillet, the knight overcame my parent's scruples."—The monk groaned. —"He had penetrated the secret of my father's avarice, and not only offered to wed me without a dowry, but offered gold himself. No written promise had been given to the other—Walter Dixon was a Calvinist, and Du Tillet persuaded my father that it would be sinful

in a good Catholic to give his daughter to the son of an heretical church. My father consented; I was passive in his hands, or rather glad to be freed from my engagement to a man I despised, though it was to wed one to whom I was indifferent. All was easily arranged, and before Walter Dixon returned, I was the wife of Sir Andrew Fleming. Messengers were despatched to warn the disappointed lover, and a hint was added that his presence was not desired. My husband was all ardour and tenderness: he was a man of deep and fearful passions; and I was cold to him as the grave. I loved him not, and I let him feel that I did not love. A deep gloom came over him, and the disappointment of fond expectation, of reciprocal passion, seemed almost to affect his brain. How much more was it so, then, when he saw me surrounded with other men, and saw the smiles in which I could deck myself for other eyes! Passion and reproach followed, and coldness and pride was the only reply. When I found that he dared to blame and to complain, where all flattered and caressed, I went from evil to evil, and where I had coquetted for sport, I now coquetted for anger. Thus the days went on in pain and displeasure to both; and bitterly, I believe, did he repent the having persuaded my father to break his word to another. At length Walter Dixon made his appearance, and the whole house prepared to look black and cold upon his coming, and to repel his reproaches with scorn. But reproaches he made none, and though Sir Andrew Fleming still frowned, my father felt relieved, and I—oh yes! I smiled basely and cruelly upon him!"

"Did you do no more than smile?" demanded the monk. "Speak! for truth must now be told, and it were vain—it were worse than vain to try to hide the amount of the sin you have committed. Remember, if you betrayed your faith to your husband, in thought, word, or deed, so much the more was—"

"I did not," replied Lady Eleanor, raising herself a little on her arm; "I did not even for a moment, in thought, word, or deed."

"Then he has told the truth," muttered the monk to himself, while Lady Eleanor continued:

"Never, never! though my husband with mad jealousy suspected both him and me. He well deserved suspicion, for he left no art untried; but I despised him as he merited, and only smiled on him in public to revenge suspicions that I did not deserve, and harshness which, perhaps, I did.—Clasp not your hands and groan, good father—I know that it was sinful, and often and bitterly have I repented that I did so. But my evil angel tempted me, and at length, when that low despicable wretch was wounded by my husband's hand in a moment of mad passion, I tended him as if he had been the dearest of beings to my heart—I sat by his bedside—I spoke words of comfort to him, I spoke kindly and affectionately of him—but not because I loved him. Oh, no! but solely to punish the other. I urged it further than that dark-spirited man Fleming could bear. He reproached—he accused me—I treated him with contempt, and did all that woman could to increase his suspicion and his wrath. Madness—for, to do him but justice, he was incapable of so acting without madness—madness took possession of his mind, and in the midst of my calm cold taunts he drew his dagger and would have stabbed me, had not that very woman who was but now in the room hung upon his arm till her screams brought aid. He was dragged away, and I declared that I would never see his face again. He yielded much more readily than I had expected; and I own that I was piqued that he did so, though at the same time he exacted a promise from myself and my father that Walter Dixon should not be again admitted to our dwelling; a promise that we both gave without a regret. When he, my husband, was gone, I was happier than ever for a time; but not long after he wrote me a letter, which by some means found its way to my heart. He told me that he still passionately loved me, and that he had alone consented to quit me because he doubted his own powers of commanding his passions under the treatment that I had shown him.

He drew a picture, too, of what domestic life might be, that made me pause and reflect. Not that I learned to love him; but I learned to regret more deeply that I was his wife; and for the first time I began to picture to myself what happiness might spring from mutual love. A change came over me; I did not cease to encourage admiration when it came near, but I ceased to seek it—I began to think that there must be something more than mere admiration to make one happy, and I began to dream dreams of love and affection, from which my ill-fated marriage was to cut me off for ever. But I must be speedy—that deadly faintness is coming back upon me—my feet and my hands are cold like marble. My father died, and though the mistress of a splendid fortune, I sought not in the town the gaze and admiration I should once have coveted; I remained in the country, I loved solitude, my time passed quietly, and I was beginning to feel the repose of virtue, when one day a note was put into my hand in the writing of Walter Dixon. It merely told me that two young Cavaliers, the sons of the Lord Masterton, were halting for a day in the village. It had no name subscribed, but I well knew the hand, for Walter Dixon had, indeed—whether he thought it would move me or not—had, indeed, saved our estates from spoliation in the civil war, or at least claimed the merit of it in a letter which he wrote me. Well, I asked the young Cavaliers to my house, and oh! my father, how shall I explain the feelings with which the elder filled my heart! It is in vain! I have no time," she added quickly, "something seems to weigh down my bosom, and choke my breath. Be it enough, then, that when I left him, and thought of the man to whom I was bound for life—what fearful feelings came across my bosom! Sir Andrew Fleming! I thought. My husband! Was it possible! I thought over all that had passed—I thought of him as a lover—as a husband; I called up his look, his conduct, his harshness, his jealousy, his anger,—and, O God! O God! how I did hate that man!"

"Woman! woman!" exclaimed the monk, rising up

from his seat, and casting back the cowl from his head. "O God! O God! how he did love you!"

Lady Eleanor's eyes fixed full upon his face, as the struggling sunbeam of a December day found its way through the high window and fell clear upon his brow. There was agony and terror in her glance, and for a moment she gazed on him in silence. At length, with fearful strength in one so evidently dying, she too rose from her recumbent position, and clasping her hands as if in the act of prayer, while her eyes still remained fixed immoveably on his face, she sank down upon her knees at his feet. A film seemed to come across her eyes—a low murmur, that was scarce a groan, broke from her lips. She fell forward on the ground—and the spirit departed for ever from its clay.

The monk grasped his forehead with his hand, and gazed on her for a moment with a look full of mingled feelings—love, and anger, and sorrow, and despair—then raising the body in his arms he placed it on the couch where she had been lying, smoothed the discomposed limbs, closed the eyes that seemed still turned imploringly towards him, and three times printed a long kiss upon the pale lips of the dead. Then turned hastily away, thrust his right hand into his robe, and exclaiming, "Now! now!" he rushed out of the apartment.

CHAPTER XIV.

Henry Masterton paced alone the length of his brother's hall; and every two or three minutes he turned and listened—but nothing sounded as if the confession had reached its close, or as if he for whom he waited had arrived. It was all silent, and with feelings far more deeply pained than cold reason justified, both for the unhappy woman who had hurried her own

fate, and for him who was to return and find his happiness, however unholy, blasted, Henry traversed and retraversed the saloon which he had first entered. He then paused, and raising the various articles that were strewed on the table, endeavoured, notwithstanding the pain he had before suffered in the contemplation, to turn his mind from the anxious dread of the present, to the memories of the past. But now every object connected itself with the scene that was passing so near him. He lifted the glove he had before remarked, but in the back there was a deep cut, and he found it broadly spotted with blood. A large chalice, wrought in some foreign workshop, stood beside it, and on examining the mounting, he found that it was supported by sculls neatly imitated in silver, while on the stalk some trembling wit had insulted the humanity he partook and the fate he dreaded, by a scurvy jest, for the sake of seeming bold in the eyes of insects like himself. Many other objects of curiosity, or elegance, lay near; but when the mind is full of any one subject, where can the matter be found between which and the engrossing topic some associations will not be discovered?

Weary, woful, anxious, the young Cavalier cast himself on a chair, and gave himself up to thought, which poured upon his brain like a troubled and a swelling sea running over the sands of the shore, with a thousand waves flowing indistinctly one into the other. Who was this Benedictine, he asked himself, whose interest in all that concerned him was so great? What was between him and Walter Dixon? Why was he seen in companionship with him, when he knew him to be a villain? What could be his personal concern in the affairs of his brother?

While he asked himself these questions, he almost regretted that he had called the Benedictine to the death-bed of Lady Eleanor Fleming; but then again he had ever remarked that there was a dignity and nobility of feeling in the monk, which, as it broke forth in minute traits and accidental circumstances, could hardly be affected, and which would guard against his

making an evil use of any thing he might learn. Besides, there was the seal of confession—a seal which, in the annals of the world, had never been known to be violated—that secured his silence and the oblivion of all that might be intrusted to his ear.

The mind of the young Cavalier next turned to the feelings of his brother; and he calculated with pain to himself all the agony that Frank would feel if, as he had divined from some casual words of Lady Eleanor, any unkindness on his part had prompted the fatal act to which she had had recourse. To lead a woman's love into sin—to teach her to violate her plighted faith—to rob her of state and station, virtue and good name, and then to let her feel for one moment how she had fallen—to dispel the bright dream, and leave nothing but the fearful truth—to make her feel the ingratitude of him whom she had loved and trusted—to repay all her sacrifices even by an unkind word!—It was what Henry could scarcely conceive; and yet there was something which whispered that in his brother's case it might be so. Frank's sneer had been, from his boyhood, as untameable as the tiger. It had spared none, it was easily excited; and how dreadful must be a sneer from one for whose love she had crushed the future, to one whose future was all crushed!

As he thus thought, a sound struck his ear as of a closing-door, and forgetting that he had been before deceived, he looked round for his page, to send him out in order to see who it was. He then first perceived that the boy was absent, and rising, he proceeded to the end of the corridor, in which, to his surprise, he found him.

"What, eaves-dropping, sir!" he exclaimed, catching him by the shoulder; "I thought you had been better trained and nurtured. Do you not know that disgrace and shame attend the spy even to his death?"

"I spy on no one but an enemy," replied the boy boldly, but colouring deeply at the same time; "and to discover a spy, it is but fair to listen to his words. Now, I hold that a man who comes hither in a differ-

ent shape from his true one, who conceals his name and station, and who winds himself into your thought, while he hides from you his own—I hold that man to be a spy indeed.—But hark! there are horses in the court-yard, and there is a foot in the vestibule."

As he spoke, the sounds caught the ear of his master also, though amid the clattering of several horses' hoofs on the stones of the paved court, he could not distinguish, at first, the tread of a foot in the vestibule below. In a moment after, however, the staircase echoed to the step of some one coming fast; and a few words, spoken rapidly between two persons without, followed.

"No, no, sir! come in!" cried the voice of Lord Masterton as the door opened. "You have put the lion on the track, and you shall see him run down the quarry, or feel his fangs yourself.—Shut the doors there below, and see that no one passes out!" And instantly after having given this order, he entered the saloon.

He was evidently heated and excited, and his dress, which showed no warlike preparations for the civil contentions in which he had been wielding his sword, bore, nevertheless, evident traces of a deep and desperate struggle. His hat was cut through—his face was blackened with smoke and gunpowder, and his gloves were stained with blood. His eye instantly fell upon Henry as he entered; and he paused suddenly in his advance, with marks of unfeigned astonishment.

"Harry!" he exclaimed, "you here!—This is unexpected," and he turned to the person who followed him —no other than Major-general Walter Dixon—asking with a curling lip, "Think you, sir, my brother does me the favour to lead the wolf to my sheepfold? But we shall soon see more."

"Speak with me a moment, Frank!" exclaimed Henry, seeing him advancing at once to the opposite door without taking further notice of him. "For God's sake, do not go in there in your present state of mind! What is the matter, Frank?"

"What is the matter, Henry Masterton!" replied his brother. "Tell me, is Sir Andrew Fleming in my

house, or is he not? He once forgot his priestship to draw steel upon me; and if I find him, I shall not remember his sanctity now."

"You will find no one there, Frank," answered Henry, "but a monk and a dying woman. You know not what has occurred, and indeed you are unfit to meet the scene before you. Pause for a moment, Frank, and hear me!"

"A dying woman!" exclaimed Lord Masterton—"a dying woman! What do you mean?—Who is dying?" and as he spoke he turned deadly pale with the forebodings which rushed across his mind. Henry paused, embarrassed how to tell the sad tidings he had to communicate—"What is it? Speak, Harry!" continued Lord Masterton. "Your looks are not enough—Is it—is it Ellen?"

"It is, indeed, Frank," replied Henry.

"Then that villain has been here and killed her!" exclaimed the young nobleman. "Let me go, Henry Masterton—I must, I will go to her."

As he spoke, the opposite door opened.—Within two yards of it stood Lord Masterton; Henry's hand was still upon his arm; and about a couple of paces behind, Walter Dixon had stopped without speaking, while the above conversation took place between the two brothers. The door was flung violently open, the tapestry was pushed aside, and the Benedictine strode into the room with madness and fury in his whole aspect. He paused a single instant, when he found himself so suddenly in the presence of several other persons; but his eyes the moment after fixed upon Lord Masterton with an expression of deadly concentrated hatred; and, in an instant, before any one could make a movement, he withdrew his right hand from his bosom, clasped tight round something that glittered as he raised it in the air, and struck the young nobleman a blow so quick, and seemingly so slight, that one could scarce conceive it would have shaken a child.

Lord Masterton stretched forth his hands, as if to grasp his assailant by the throat—but his eyes rolled

unmeaningly in his head, and reeling a moment where he stood, he fell back into the arms of his brother, deluging him with blood.

"Villain!" cried Walter Dixon, "atrocious villain!" and drawing his sword with the rapidity of lightning, he at once passed it through the body of the murderer. The monk strove to strike him with the dagger he still grasped, but his blow fell wide, and the parliamentarian again plunged his sword into his bosom. Without a word, or a cry, or a groan, Sir Andrew Fleming—for he indeed it was—fell dead upon the floor. Both the first and the second wound he had received were of a mortal kind, and he was dead before his head struck the ground. Not a movement, not a shudder, not a convulsive gasp intervened; but there he lay—now a living man, and now a corpse.

Not so Lord Masterton. The dagger had struck him between the first and second ribs, and had divided some large blood-vessel in its passage; but he yet lived; and while the gore poured forth from his bosom with fearful rapidity, he pressed his brother's hand—as Henry endeavoured to stanch the blood—but forcibly resisted the attempt. By this time the room was full of servants, who had returned with their lord from the struggle which had taken place that morning between the Fronde and the troops of the court on the little plain of St. Michel, and who had followed him towards the saloon, after closing the doors according to his order. Two of them had arrived in time to behold the fall of the Benedictine, and all ran forward to aid their lord, but he refused any assistance, and pointing forward to the door, pronounced with painful struggles the word "Eleanor." One of the men instantly ran to fulfil what he conceived to be his master's desire, and to call the unhappy lady to his side; but he returned in a moment after still paler than he went, followed by the attendant who had witnessed her mistress's agonies, and had by this time learned her death.

"Gracious God!" she cried, clasping her hands as she gazed upon the prostrate form of Lord Masterton,

who lay with his head supported on his brother's arm as Henry knelt beside him. "Gracious God! and he dying too! I told my lady what would come of it when she took the first step."

"Your mistress! your mistress!" ejaculated Lord Masterton, struggling with the suffocating blood that seemed to pour into his chest and choke his utterance. "Your mistress, Bertha!"

"Alas, my lord! I have no lady, now!" replied the woman.

Lord Masterton closed his eyes, raised his hand, and let it fall again upon the ground. His eyes opened, his under-jaw dropped, and Henry Masterton was alone —the last of his race!

There was a momentary pause, as the young Cavalier gazed close and intently upon his brother's face, and all the rest hung over him in painful and fearful expectation, not knowing whether the last breath had parted for ever from the lips of the young English noble or not. But no light came back into the glassy eyes; not another breath heaved the heavy bosom of the dead; and Henry Masterton gently laid down the head of his brother, and rose up as from some horrible dream.

The servants who stood around him were all French, and knew him not; but from some instinctive perception, that his interest in the dying man was greater than that of any other person present, they had remained passive round him while he upheld the body of his brother in his arms. Now, however, they began to ask each other who he was, and one more shrewd and careful than the rest left the room hastily to seek the criminal lieutenant of the city, for the purpose of taking cognizance of all that had occurred.

To the other servants the attendant who had followed Lady Eleanor from England soon explained that the young gentleman they saw was the brother of their dead lord, and prompt obedience to his commands and ready proffers of service were the consequences.

Walter Dixon in the mean time, while these events were rapidly passing near, had coolly wiped his sword in his glove, and returned it to its sheath. He then approached the body of the Benedictine, who had fallen forward on his face; and after gazing on it for a moment as it lay, he turned it over with his foot, even while the yet unstiffened limbs hung languidly back in the position they had assumed, with the flaccid relaxation of late death. When he had succeeded in rolling over the body, without touching it with his hands, he looked steadfastly on the countenance of the dead man, as if studying carefully the lineaments of that cold meaningless face.

"Thou art changed," he said at length, addressing the corpse. "Thou art changed, but still the same. I did not think it would be my hand which should do it. But it is right as it is."

He then turned towards the young Cavalier, who was still standing by the side of his dead brother.

"Henry Lord Masterton," he said, "I congratulate you on your accession to your family honours. May you enjoy them more wisely than those that are gone!"

He spoke calmly and seriously; but Henry felt as if the very word congratulation were an insult at such a moment.

"I thank you not for your congratulations, sir," he replied; "because, standing with so many causes of grief around me, I have little subject for congratulation in my fate. But I thank you, General Dixon, for having avenged my brother with such ready zeal, although —if the idea which has but now crossed my mind be true, and this dead man be Sir Andrew Fleming—perhaps your sword was the servant of your own interest, as well as of my indignation."

"You do me more, and less than justice, young gentleman," replied the other. "I acted from impulse, and therefore not on the *wise principle* of consulting my own interest, as I should call it, or the *base one* as you might term it. It is fortunate, however, and rare, to

find so foolish an act as the yielding to impulse rewarded by the removal of an obstacle in our path. However, *milor*, as these knaves will soon learn to call you, let me advise you to make haste, and secure all that your brother has left of valuable in this country, otherwise his most Christian majesty will come in with his *droit d'aubaine*, and sweep away all, as clean as a dog licks a greasy plate."

Henry turned away in disgust. "I understand, sir," he answered, as he walked towards the inner chamber, "that one of the servants has gone to summon the criminal lieutenant, for whose arrival we must all of course wait. I seek to be alone at present, therefore I leave you; but we may have to speak more hereafter, ere we part."

Thus saying, he turned and left the room, while Walter Dixon, with a sneer, observed that he had grown both solemn and proud on his new lordship. It may easily be conceived, however, that the infinity of new thoughts and feelings which rushed upon the mind of Henry Masterton demanded some pause of solitary reflection. All the painful scenes through which he had passed that day floated confused before his eyes like the memory of a frightful dream, and he could scarcely believe that they were real. When, however, he had paused for a time upon the mere facts, he began naturally to seek the causes of what had taken place, and as he did so, he was led strongly to suspect that Walter Dixon was no mean mover in the whole.—Might he not, whose interest it was to remove Sir Andrew Fleming from his path—might he not be the person to tell him that his faithless wife was then in Paris with her paramour? Might he not lead him to the very dwelling near which he had met the monk that morning? and might he not then, as he had seen him do, bring back the passionate and fearless lover, to dispute the unhappy woman with her fierce and phrensied husband? The event perhaps had not been exactly such as he expected; but in such an affray as was certain to take place under those circumstances, the calm and calcu-

lating villain had probably felt sure of finding means to work out the purposes of self-interest. Such at least had been the result; and on comparing his past history with the present circumstances, Henry found that all the objects for which Walter Dixon had been striving through life were attained by the events of that morning. He had avenged himself with his own hand on him who had crossed him in love and in ambition, and he had removed the only obstacle to his possession of those estates which he had so long coveted.

Other considerations then followed, and the more Henry Masterton found himself alone in the world by the death of the last member of his family, the more his heart turned yearning towards her who alone had the power to replace them all. But where was he to find her? The dead murderer of his brother was the last who could give him any clew to her place of dwelling. With him the secret of her removal and the knowledge of her abode had died, and the last link of the chain was broken. It might be years, he thought, long years before he found her; and that fancy added to all that he had suffered and undergone that day—the first which he had stirred abroad since his long and painful illness—totally overcame him, and casting himself on a seat before the table, he buried his face in his arms, and gave up his mind to every painful anticipation. He had not sat long, when little Ball-o'-fire ran in, to announce the arrival of an officer called the *quaternier*, with his commissaries and a body of archers, the criminal lieutenant not having been found. An immediate inquiry began to take place into the events of the morning, and the officer of police commenced his operations by putting every person present under the surveillance of his archers, sagely remarking, that as three persons were, he found, killed, somebody must have killed them. The English refugees, he also remarked, were always filling Paris with their squabbles, and it was high time that the law should take severe notice of their irregularities. After these preliminary observations, he proceeded to view the bodies as they

lay, taking a written note of their exact state, and then to examine the persons present.

Henry, as brother of the dead nobleman, was the first he thought fit to interrogate; and as the first also, his examination was protracted to a fatiguing length, having to explain who all the parties were. When his evidence was gone through, that of Walter Dixon and the servants was taken; and it became very plain —the quaternier declared—that the Benedictine monk, formerly the husband of the lady who had poisoned herself, had in a fit of wrath and jealousy stabbed her seducer. So far all was clear; but when little Ball-o'-fire's examination was entered into, though some embarrassment occurred, from his difficulty in speaking French, yet he positively declared that Walter Dixon's sword was drawn before the monk had struck his master's brother, and adhered to the declaration, in spite of the contradictions of the English officer and the cross-examination of the Parisians.

Henry acknowledged that he could give no light upon the subject, as his back had been turned to Walter Dixon at the time; nor could the servants afford any information corroborative of either one statement or the other, as, when the first of them arrived in the room, the monk was already falling.

In the opinion of the quaternier, who was full of most excellent differences, those contradictory statements were of the greatest importance to the circumstances of the case. If, after seeing a friend slain by another man, he argued, one draws one's sword and slays the murderer, one is fully justified; for Heaven knows how many more murders that man might commit; but if the sword be drawn, as here stated, before a blow is struck, or, as the boy declares, before it is even menaced, it shows a predetermination in the drawer to kill some one. "I shall, therefore, certainly," he continued, "release all parties here present, except the aforesaid Walter Dixon, whom I shall carry with me to the Hotel de Ville, to wait the further perquisitions of the criminal lieutenant. All the others, however, must inscribe

their names and places of dwelling in this book, that they may be called upon as witnesses, should the case require it; and in the mean time, every one must quit the house, till such time as the proper officer, by the king appointed to collect the *droits d'aubaine*, have notice, and take heed that his majesty be not defrauded of his dues."

Walter Dixon threatened and remonstrated, but in vain. And after having enrolled all the names of the persons present, examined the whole premises, and locked the various doors, the quaternier and his archers caused every one to vacate the saloon, in order that he might secure the last door. The wrath of the parliamentary officer, however, knew no bounds; and as he passed out, he struck the page, whose testimony had occasioned his confinement, a violent blow with his clenched fist. The boy instantly betook himself to his dagger, and Walter Dixon's life would have been held by a frail tenure, had not one of the archers seized the page in his arms, and his master commanded him to sheath his weapon.

He did as he was ordered; but before he did so, he shook the blade at his adversary, adding the word, "Beware!"

The parliamentarian gave him a glance of scorn, and the quaternier, after having informed the young Cavalier that the following morning admittance would be given to himself, or any one on his part, to perform the last offices for the dead, led his prisoner away, and Henry Masterton turned towards his own dwelling. He had scarcely reached the gate of the court, however, when he was overtaken by his brother's servants, demanding payment of their wages; and though somewhat sick at the obtrusion of their petty self-interests upon the sorrows and distresses which at that moment occupied his mind, he informed them that, to the best of his belief, the inhuman and unjust law which appropriated all the effects of a stranger dying in France to the crown, made a provision for the payment of all just debts. Nevertheless, to put them more at their ease,

he gave them his address at the Hotel of Monsieur de Vitray, and informed them that if their claims were not discharged by the commissioners of the aubainage, he would take care that they should be paid.

The female attendant of Lady Eleanor Fleming had been permitted by the quaternier to keep possession of the vacant chambers in the lower part of the house; and as, from various circumstances, Henry was inclined to believe that she possessed a better mind than perhaps might have been expected, he spoke a few words of comfort and consolation to her, assuring her that he would do all in his power to make her future fate easy and comfortable.

"I am a Catholic, sir, as was my mistress," she replied, "and I desire nothing but to retire into a convent. I was brought up with my lady from her infancy, and I easily taught myself to have no object in life but her. I have seen her father first, and herself afterward, throw away all the happiness that she might have enjoyed. With every gift that Heaven could bestow—a splendid fortune—high rank—great beauty—fine talents—and, indeed, indeed, sir—though you think not—an excellent heart: from some error in her early education, I have seen her pass through life without happiness, and die a terrible and a painful death, at seven-and-twenty years of age. I have had enough of the world, sir, and all I wish is to leave it for ever."

CHAPTER XV.

The dull light of a short winter's day was beginning to draw to its close as Henry Masterton returned towards the hotel of Monsieur de Vitray. On entering the court he found the whole house in confusion, and soon discovered, by the various exclamations of the servants, that he was himself the cause.

"Here he is! here he is!" cried one. "Run and tell monsieur," exclaimed another. "Monsieur has been seeking for you, sir, high and low," said a third.

"How could you be so imprudent, mon cher ami!" cried Monsieur de Vitray himself, coming down the steps of his house into the court to meet his young friend, and still habited in the cuirass and blue scarf which he had borne in the day's skirmish. "How could you be so imprudent! If you are not careful for your own sake, you should really be careful for the sake of my reputation. Your English friends will say that the Frenchman did not take sufficient charge of you, and it will get abroad that the French are an inhospitable people; whereas, on the contrary, if there be a land on earth which is really the temple of hospitality, it is France. I know my own incapacity and my own imperfections, and I am perfectly aware that if you had fallen into the hands of more capable and wealthy men than myself, and at a time when the tranquillity of the country permitted greater attention, you would have received a thousand times more kindness than I have had it in my power to show. Nevertheless, the will has not been wanting, and you must not endanger your own life, and my credit, and the honour of France, by such imprudence. I could not and would not believe the servants who told me you had left the house."

To stop him before he got to the end of his speech was impossible, and Henry was obliged to hear him out. As soon as he paused, however, he told him that the cause of his going forth was one of too much consequence to be neglected, and that during his absence from the house he had met with many circumstances to distress and horrify him, in regard to which he would beg his counsel and assistance.

"Willingly, willingly, my dear young gentleman," replied Monsieur de Vitray; "willingly shall you have such poor advice as my mind can furnish, and such poor assistance as my power can afford. But let us in out of the cold air. *Ventre Saint Gris!* I find I have a touch of the rheumatism, and I do not bear my cuirass as easily as I did in former days. Go into the little cabinet, we will sup alone by a blazing fire, and I will bid the servants deny me to every one but our friend Dom André; and his advice, you know, may be very serviceable also."

"No, no!" replied Henry, with a shudder, while the image of the Benedictine as he had last seen him came up before his eyes. "No, no! he will not come this night—nor ever again," he muttered to himself.

"Well, well!" rejoined Monsieur de Vitray. "We will shut our door then on all the world. I will but cast off this heavy cuirass, and change my apparel, and will join you in a moment."

"I too must change my dress," replied Henry, "for my coat is stiff with blood."

"With blood!" exclaimed Monsieur de Vitray: "you are not surely wounded again! Young gentleman, you will contrive to abridge your space of life to a very, very narrow span, if you do not take better care."

"It is not my own blood," replied Henry, in a melancholy tone; "though too near akin to mine, unhappily."

"What, an affair of honour!" cried Monsieur de Vitray, in a lighter tone; "you were not fit, indeed, my young friend; you were not fit. But since it is so,

change your garb, come down to my little cabinet, and we will talk it all over alone."

Thus saying, he skipped up the stairs with strange symptoms in all his movements of rheumatism struggling hard with habitual grace and activity. Henry, in the mean time, proceeded slowly to his chamber, changed his dress, which was stiff with his brother's blood, and then descending to Monsieur de Vitray's private cabinet, cast himself into a chair before the fire, to wait that gentleman's return. As he sat there, for the first time during the whole day he felt his wound: so absorbing had been the interest of the scenes through which he had passed, that they had not only occupied all his thoughts, but seemed also to have deadened his very corporeal feelings; and it is possible he might still have forgotten that he was wounded, had not the remonstrances of Monsieur de Vitray recalled his situation to his mind. But his own sufferings did not now divert his mind from all the fearful remembrance of that morning's events. The windows were closed, the old dark tapestry hung all round, the fagots blazed and crackled bright and loud, the chair in which he sat was easy and soft; but it seemed as if every accessory of comfort and luxury, and the warm, cheerful arts of life but the more strongly called up to memory those he had left cold and stiff upon the bloody floor where they had fallen, unwatched, untended, and alone.

Monsieur de Vitray, however, did not suffer him long to indulge such sad thoughts, but rejoined him in a few moments, giving a thousand orders as he came for serving supper in an hour, bringing lights, and refusing entrance to every one during the evening.

"Well, my young friend," he said, as he also seated himself before the wide chimney, "well, how you have chanced to quarrel with any one since you have been in my house, or how any one has chanced to quarrel with you, puzzles me much. Nevertheless, as it is so, it—"

"But, my dear sir, it is not so," interrupted the young Cavalier, taking the only opportunity of cutting

across his good friend's oration, before it deviated into the infinite. "You have rather misunderstood me. The matter, I am sorry to say, is far worse than a simple duel, if you will be kind enough to hear me state it to you."

"I am all attention, my young friend," replied Monsieur de Vitray, "nevertheless, allow me to remark that, whatever be the circumstances, France is a country in which equity and justice reign supreme. If any one be injured, in what country is redress so easy as in France?—if any one be afflicted, where can he find that consolation which is to affliction what justice is to injury, so soon as in France? Solon himself never devised laws so well calculated to promote the security of individuals, the tranquillity of the public, the protection of the innocent, and the punishment of the guilty, as those which we enjoy in France; and, as I feel perfectly certain that you have done nothing on which the brow of justice should frown, I congratulate you on being able to seek the protection of her smile."

Henry had almost abandoned his purpose of consulting Monsieur de Vitray, in despair at the first mention of France, but, when he found his oration so soon brought to an end, he proceeded to relate to him all the events of the morning without concealment or reserve. The naturally fine and sensitive mind of his hearer was deeply affected at the detail, and, with the drops really standing in his eyes, he pressed Henry's hand, saying, in a very different tone from that which Walter Dixon had employed, "I congratulate you, with tears, my dear young friend, on being the head of your house. I know how it must pain you to become, as you have, the rightful owner of a high station—and I hope, too, of a high fortune—by the cruel death of your unhappy brother; but, at the same time, it is surely matter of congratulation that an illustrious name, and a long inheritance of honour, has fallen into hands whence it will derive additional splendour. Had it remained with your brother, my dear sir, the glory of your family must have slumbered in obscurity, or have been tar-

nished by open vice, and that must give you some consolation for the loss of one whom, however faulty, you seem to have deeply loved."

A desultory conversation of some length then ensued, in the course of which every little circumstance which Henry had omitted was detailed, and many questions asked, and no small horror, and wonder, and commiseration were expressed by Monsieur de Vitray at the tragedy of the morning.

"In regard to Sir Andrew Fleming," he continued, "I cannot help regretting him deeply; I have known him since he first came to France as a young man to perfect himself by travel. He was then as noble a cavalier as you would wish to look upon, skilful to a miracle in the use of arms, and, though sometimes sterner than his youth could justify, he was not averse to innocent pleasure. He was rather wayward and fitful, however, which we, his companions, attributed to a certain unhappy drop in his blood, which might verge towards insanity. His father had died by his own hand, we heard, and though the lady his mother was said to be as simply plodding a dame as any in all Europe, yet enough of his father's spirit reigned in his bosom to make him wild and violent in his passions, dark and singular in his caprices. When in Italy, we were told that he had nearly renounced the world, and become a barefooted Capuchin. He was driven from Rome for killing a cardinal's nephew in a duel, and then wandered afar through the East, I have heard him say, and even to Jerusalem itself; but still, whenever he passed through France, he failed not to pause for at least ten days in my dwelling."

"And yet you were very different men," said the young Cavalier. "I should scarcely have thought that the humour of the one would have suited that of the other."

"We were, indeed, as different as two men could be," replied De Vitray, "but we had known each other long, and there were a thousand pleasant memories common to us both. Our friendship, too, had been

formed in the expansive time of youth, when hearts are open and soft; of the impressions then received many indeed are wiped out—obliterated—effaced and changed—but those which do last are hardened by the petrifying power of time into lines that death can only destroy. You have heard, of course, the story of his love, his marriage, his jealousy, and his separation from his wife. He came over again to France with feelings excited almost to madness; the only sane principle that seemed left in his mind was the conviction of its being absolutely necessary for him to absent himself from her and from her family, lest, as he said, he should destroy them all. Time, however, moderated his feelings; and the better spirit which always governed him when he was cool taught him to reproach and check himself for much of what had passed. He inflicted on himself a deep and bitter penance, and as he felt the separation must be for ever, he qualified himself according to the institute, and entered the society of Jesus.

"Three years then elapsed without my seeing him, and it was the spring of the last year when he visited me near Dol. He was then on his way to England, his wife's father having died, and his jealousy of her conduct having again revived. He was accompanied, also, by another Jesuit, who went, I believe, on some political intrigue, and by an English officer long in the service of France, whose purpose was to offer his sword to his native king the moment he was freed from his engagement to the French crown; but it proved too late. The whole was over before he arrived."

"May I ask the names of his companions?" demanded Henry Masterton eagerly, a sudden gleam of light pouring in upon some points that had long been obscure to his mind's eye.

"Certainly," replied Monsieur de Vitray; "the one I knew slightly, the other I still know well. The first was Du Tillet, a Jesuit, and an old friend of Sir Andrew Fleming; the other was the well-known General St. Maur. But why do you ask?"

"I will tell you in a moment," replied the young

Cavalier; "but first let me inquire, was there not a striking likeness between Du Tillet and the man who died to-day?"

"None at all," the other answered: "yet there might be a little," he added, after a moment's thought, "but very slight; they were both dark men, and somewhat about the same height; but that was all, at least to my perception."

"I saw Du Tillet the very spring to which you allude," replied the young Cavalier; and it now strikes me that it is the remembrance of his face which has been haunting me every time I have looked upon Sir Andrew Fleming. The likeness is so strong."

"You are mistaken," answered Monsieur de Vitray; "Du Tillet you could not see, for he died within five days of his landing at Exmouth of a fever caught in a small cabin where they lay concealed on their first arrival; it was Sir Andrew Fleming himself you saw. Being better known, and having more enemies than the other, he took Du Tillet's name. He told me also, when you arrived at my house on that dark stormy night, that you had rendered him some great service in England; but begged me, as in his monk's dress you did not recognise him, to say nothing which would lead your mind to the subject, giving as a reason, that he was at deadly feud with your brother. How deadly I now too well perceive."

Henry paused and thought deeply for several minutes. "You are right," he said at length; "I now see it all. How long is it since this unfortunate man last returned to France?"

"It was towards the end of the month of June," replied Monsieur de Vitray; "and he came back with one or two severe wounds yet unclosed."

"They were dealt by the hand of my unfortunate brother," said the young Cavalier: "doubtless their meeting on that occasion also was concerted by one who has since carried his schemes, I feel sure, to a more successful conclusion. I cannot prove it, it is true," he added, after thinking for several minutes over

all the circumstances in which the fate and actions of his brother might have been influenced by the schemes of Walter Dixon. "I cannot prove it, it is true; but I feel as certain as that I now live, that the Walter Dixon who, as I told you, is at this moment in prison for the death of the monk, brought back my brother this day with the purpose of exciting Sir Andrew Fleming and himself to destroy each other. The estates of his cousin Lady Eleanor were, it seems, only refused to him by the council of state on the score of Sir Andrew Fleming's prior right; and he has taken care to remove that objection."

"Doubtless, doubtless!" replied Monsieur de Vitray. "I have known many a cunning man labour long and painfully to bring another to commit a crime for his profit, which he would not do for himself but in the last extremity: but we must not forget that, as our law goes, the proof of an interested motive in slaying my unhappy and misjudging friend would do much to give him over to the executioner."

"Such a motive would be difficult to prove," answered the young Cavalier, "and I have but to offer simple suspicion. He, too, avenged my brother's death, and I must not lend my voice to hang him for that very act. However it may be, I cannot believe that the Almighty justice will fail to overtake that man—that very Almighty justice which he mocks, by making a glory of his bold villany; and I will trust to it to avenge upon his head all the sorrows and the ruin that his machinations have brought upon my house."

"Be it so, my young friend!" said Monsieur de Vitray; "you judge sanely, and far be it from me either to doubt that God will avenge his own attributes. Nor have I any cause to blame the man, though my poor friend fell under his hand. He fell in the commission of an act which, criminal in any one, was still more criminal in the minister of a God of peace. He took upon him, I am afraid, the religious habit, not because he felt within him that mortification of the passions which fits man for the service of God, but rather be-

cause he hoped that that service would aid him in controlling those passions; and, as might be expected, the passions triumphed over the vows; the ordinance was forgot, and the priest of a bloodless religion became a murderer. Fain, fain would I have persuaded him from the first to pause ere he exchanged the more easy order of Loyola for the stricter rule of the Benedictines; opposition made him but the more impatient, and all the prescribed forms were abridged to favour his speedy admission to an order which he has been the first, I believe, on record to stain with bloodguiltiness. But here comes Bernardin to announce our evening meal, during which you can tell me what is the subject on which you were about to command my aid or counsel."

"It was merely in regard to the rights of escheatage, or aubaine, as it is called in France, that I was going to ask your advice in particular," replied the Cavalier; "of course my brother's servants and general debts will be paid before the King of France lays his hands upon the effects he leaves."

At the word aubaine, good Monsieur de Vitray coloured deeply, and played with the strings of his collar repeating several times, "In France, my young friend, in France, you see,—in France the droits d'aubaine, or right by which the king claims the property of foreigners dying on the soil—But supper waits, we will speak of the droits d'aubaine hereafter."

It was evident enough that Monsieur de Vitray was not a little puzzled how to reconcile the existence of such an inhuman practice with the laws which, he boasted, excelled those of Solon himself.* Henry Masterton, however, felt no disposition to force him into a defence of the droits d'aubaine, and proceeding to the adjoining chamber, restricted his questions concerning the king's claims in this matter solely to the point whether his brother's debts would be discharged.

"Beyond all doubt," replied Monsieur de Vitray; "the king merely demands the effects left by a stranger

* It is scarcely necessary to state that the droit d'aubaine has long ceased to exist.

after all other claims upon them are discharged. And as you say that your brother possessed a considerable sum in the hands of some merchants, vested in bills of exchange, I doubt not that that also may be secured to you: but we will consult some lawyer on the subject."

Henry was now a little embarrassed in turn, and, much to the surprise of Monsieur de Vitray, he positively declined taking any steps to save the large sum which his brother had brought with him from England. He knew that Frank had carried with him from Masterton House no means of procuring such a resource; and he felt convinced internally that the sum had been raised by the sale of plate and jewels belonging to Lady Eleanor Fleming. To appropriate money thus obtained was of course out of the question; and feeling a disinclination to mention his motive to Monsieur de Vitray, he simply declined taking any step for its recovery, without assigning a reason.

The good Frenchman argued and persuaded, talked and wondered, embarrassed himself more than once in the rights and wrongs of the droits d'aubaine, got himself profoundly puzzled between his sense of justice and his love of every thing French, and eventually gave up trying to induce Henry to pursue his claim, as much from his own embarrassment as from the other's firmness.

He promised, however, at the young nobleman's request, to employ some of the *gens-de-robe* to see the servants properly paid; and this having been settled, Henry proposed to retire to his chamber. "I have much sad business," he said, "to transact to-morrow, I am fatigued enough to-day, and indeed I feel that I need some repose."

"If you will follow my advice, my young friend," replied Monsieur de Vitray, "you will not stir out of these doors to-morrow. Leave all the sad business you mention to me. It luckily happens that a truce of ten days has been agreed upon this very afternoon. I am perfectly idle, and will see every thing performed as you could wish. Under the circumstances that exist, as a

foreigner and a stranger, you would run the risk of infinite uncomfort in fulfilling the task you speak of yourself. In every great town there is a rabble, and though that of Paris is more polished and civilized than that of any other nation upon earth, it is a rabble still. I have known many disgraceful scenes take place at the funerals of heretics; and as in the present case there is a terrible story attached to the business, you will but make yourself an object of wonder and attention, if not of insult, by being present. You require repose, too, indeed. You have done enough to kill a man in your state already. I wish you would take some refreshment. If you cannot eat, as you seem to refuse your supper, drink one glass of this Burgundy, mixed with equal parts of water. Exhaustion is what you have now to fear. After that, go to bed, repose yourself all to-morrow, and leave the rest to me."

Henry Masterton took the wine and water that his friend recommended, but he did not yet leave him. "As you are so kind," he replied, "as to take upon you what must be a painful task, even to the most indifferent, I will, as you say, trust to you entirely. The only wish I have to express is, that the whole may be conducted with decent privacy. Under such circumstances, the least ostentation would be vicious. The funeral of the unhappy man who slew my brother will, I suppose—"

"Of course, it will be conducted by his convent, to which I will send notice of the event," interposed Monsieur de Vitray. "Shocked and astonished will the reverend fathers be; for though to those who knew Sir Andrew Fleming in the world, such an unhappy termination of his existence has nothing in it to excite wonder, the holy brothers of Dom André suspected not, I believe, the violent passions which animated his bosom. I remember to have heard General St. Maur declare, in his gay way, that when they were serving together in the Low Countries, Sir Andrew Fleming's whole life was either a dream or duel."

"As you have mentioned General St. Maur again,"

said the young Cavalier, "I would fain hear something more of him. I have a letter to him from England, which I must deliver ere I proceed on what will prove, I am afraid, a long and painful search. Pray God it be not a fruitless one! But before you speak of Monsieur St. Maur, let me beg you to request the superior of the Benedictine convent to make close search among the papers of the dead man, in order to discover any trace that may exist of the dwelling of the Lady Emily Langleigh."

"Put the name and the question down on paper," replied Monsieur de Vitray; "give it to me to-morrow morning, and I will undertake that, if any traces do exist, they shall be communicated to you. As to Monsieur de St. Maur, I will introduce you to him when you will. He resides not five miles from Paris, and is gay, lively, brilliant, brave, and generous; in short, in all but birth he is a Frenchman. He fell into some troubles, I have heard, in England, many years ago; came over here with a sufficient, though not a large fortune, and seeing at once the infinite superiority of France to every other country on the earth, he has made it his home. For employment he entered the service, distinguished himself highly, rose to the rank of general, and Heaven knows what he might have been, had he not been a heretic,—I beg your pardon—a Protestant. He now lives very much retired, has a beautiful small house about two leagues from the town, a fine park and garden; an establishment that goes like clock-work, and the finest hyacinths in Europe. By-the-way, I will write to him this very night, and communicate your wish to see him."

After this, the conversation rambled for some time over various unimportant subjects; and at length, Monsieur de Vitray, having been withheld from his favourite theme by the interests of the matter before him longer than ever was known, verged rapidly into a disquisition on the beauties and excellence of France. In the present instance, his oration proved highly serviceable, in a way which he did not intend, for, acting

as a soporific on the excited mind of his young friend, it procured him a night of sound and refreshing sleep. The next morning when he woke, he found that Monsieur de Vitray had long gone forth, and to his surprise discovered that it was verging towards midday. But the exciting and continued occupation of his mind during the former day, and the long and profound sleep which he had since enjoyed, had acted far from unfavourably on his health. The surgeon, on visiting his wound, declared him in every respect infinitely better than he had yet been, and advised, as the best means of completing the cure, gentle and regular exercise. Henry, nevertheless, remained within during the whole day, pondering over much that was bitter, and much that was gloomy. He felt and knew, that according to the rapid and somewhat (he thought) irreverent custom of the country, the body of his last relative was, in all probability, even then being carried on its bloody bier to the cold earth. The separation, it is true, had taken place; death had closed his adamantine door between them, and in the eye of both religion and philosophy there was nothing more to lose, now that the soul was departed. But unhappily on this earth, we are so much more familiar with the body than the spirit—the body is so much more the object of all our senses, the corporeal faculties are so entirely the medium of our communication with the mind within, that though we may abstractedly regret the absence of the feeling soul that we loved, we cannot but experience a deep pang at parting with the clay to which long habit of commune had endeared us—which was the residence of the being to whom our best affections were given—which was the more familiar minister of a king whom we knew alone by the actions of his servants.

Henry Masterton wept the death of his brother more, perhaps, on the day which saw his remains consigned to the earth than even at the moment of his fall. Nor did he mourn him the less, that in the memory of his life there was much matter for sorrow and reproach; that many a weakness and many a fault were written

in the record of his actions. His tears were the bitterer, but not the fewer, that while he wept his brother he had also to weep his errors, and to weep that those errors could never be repented or atoned. Thus the day passed by, and late in the evening Monsieur de Vitray returned. He pressed the hand of his young friend, merely saying, "It is all over! General Dixon, too," he added, "by the favour of some of his friends in Paris, and the want of any evidence of evil intent, has been liberated, his act being construed by the criminal lieutenant as mere sudden retaliation upon a murderer, without forethought or malice. Here is a singular note enough," continued Monsieur de Vitray, "which has just been put into my hands in answer to the one I sent to the General St. Maur. Hear what he writes:—

"'General St. Maur is much obliged to the Marquis de Vitray for the proposal he has been kind enough to make, but, as he has not the slightest inclination to see Lord Masterton, he will thank him not to bring him.'"

Henry coloured deeply, and Monsieur de Vitray shrugged his shoulders, observing, "C'est un original!"

CHAPTER XVI.

The young Cavalier made no comment upon the somewhat rude reply which had been returned to his friend's letter. "It was on his own business that I sought this General St. Maur," he thought, "and whether—as from the wording of his letter it would appear it does—he mistakes me for my brother or not, the answer he has chosen to send is equally uncivil." The matter seemed, in some degree, explained indeed, by Monsieur de Vitray saying, that although the English officer had not absolutely taken arms on either side in the idle war of the Fronde, he had decidedly favoured the court party, against which Monsieur do

Vitray had acted. The conversation on that subject, however, dropped there; and Henry Masterton resolved to devote his whole exertions to discovering Emily Langléigh, without taking any extraordinary trouble to benefit a man who repelled his first advance so rudely. Monsieur de Vitray's kindness, it proved, had comprised within one day the execution of all that his young friend had intrusted to his care.

"You were not up this morning," he said, "when I set out, but I had not forgotten the question which you bade me ask of the superior of the Benedictines of the quartier St. Jacques, and as of course a part of my melancholy task lay with him, I put your inquiries according to your wish. Very few papers of any kind were left by the unhappy man who is dead, and those are letters. The superior was all kindness and liberality, and knowing me personally, as well as my intimacy with the deceased, he permitted me to examine such documents as could be found. The only reference to the Lady Emily Langleigh that we were able to discover was contained in a letter from some person in England, who had been apparently directed by Sir Andrew Fleming to watch the motions of your brother. This epistle went to inform him that the news was certain that Colonel Masterton was, beyond all doubt, going to marry the Lady Emily Langleigh, and that therefore there was not the slightest chance of return to Penford-bourne. It is dated two or three months since, and is signed 'Gabriel Jones.'"

"The villain has been playing into the hands of all parties," muttered the young nobleman, and Monsieur de Vitray went on to assure him that the prior had translated several letters for him into French, and that he had himself run over all the rest without finding the name of Emily Langleigh repeated.

Henry's only hope now was Walter Dixon, who seemed to have been but too well acquainted with the movements of every one whose affairs had any relation to his own; and though he felt unspeakable reluctance to hold any commune with a man on whose mo-

tives or actions he could not for an instant rely, yet the hope of recovering the traces of Emily Langleigh were superior to every other consideration, and he determined to seek him out without delay. In the mean time he explained his difficulties to Monsieur de Vitray, in whose zeal, activity, and good sense he had by this time learned to place the greatest reliance, notwithstanding the foible that obscured the better qualities of his mind. The worthy marquis entered into his cause with all the eager and chivalrous kindness which might have been expected from a young man of five-and-twenty. He declared that it was the most extraordinary and unfortunate incident that ever was heard. It was quite a romance! it was equal to any thing in Astrea!

"However," he continued, "France is a country, my young friend, where a man may do any thing he pleases, provided he violates no law. He may conceal himself for ever, if he chooses it, without the possibility of any one discovering him: such are the wonderful facilities for privacy and secrecy which this country affords above all others on the face of the earth."

"Your tidings, my dear sir," replied the young Cavalier, "are not particularly consolatory for the seekers, at all events."

"But mark me! mark me, milor!" rejoined De Vitray, "I only spoke of those who wish to conceal themselves; for, on the other hand, if a person wishes to discover the dwelling of any one who has no intention or purpose of hiding themselves from his search, he will meet with as many facilities in the pursuit, as there are in the former case facilities of evasion. Now I do not suppose that your lady love—as I very well see this lady is—has any inclination to conceal her dwelling from you, and therefore I bid you take heart, and never fear; for that, if she be in France, aided by the enthusiasm of a true Frenchman, though an unworthy one, you will very soon find her."

Some general plans were then arranged; but Monsieur de Vitray at length broke suddenly across all

other topics, exclaiming, "But, good heaven! I had forgot, and so had you, my dear friend, a matter of great importance. Before we proceed to seek out the bride, we had better secure the means of supporting her with honour and propriety. Besides, common politeness requires you to pay your respects in the very first instance to the Duke de Longueville, and offer him your thanks for the post he has been kind enough to bestow on you. Let us do that to-morrow; it will but take you half an hour; and having made sure of the appointment, and obtained sufficient leave to absent yourself, we shall proceed on our search with redoubled vigour."

"I scarce think," replied Henry Masterton, "that decency will permit me to appear in public society so soon after my brother's death. The Duke of Longueville will, I feel sure, pardon the neglect under the circumstances in which I am placed; and the day after to-morrow we will wait upon his highness. To-morrow I will seek out Walter Dixon, and discover what knowledge he possesses of my Emily's abode—an employment in the course of which I shall be called to mingle with no company of strangers, which would, I suppose, be inevitably the case at the house of Monsieur de Longueville."

Monsieur de Vitray smiled; for however blinded, in some respects, by one particular theory, he was by no means blind to the human heart in general.

"You will do well to consider, my dear young gentleman," he said, calmly and kindly, "whether the loss you may sustain by neglecting the Duke de Longueville, would not be greater than the temporary delay in seeking Walter Dixon could occasion. I tell you fairly, without wishing to make a merit of it, this post of governor of the château of Fescamp was wrung out of Monsieur de Longueville by no small petition and some service, contrary to the craving voices of a thousand applicants, who had to recommend them, besides other qualities, that of being Frenchmen."

"If that be the case, my dear sir," replied Henry,

"I will not hesitate, but go. I would not for the world that a thing you generously solicited and obtained on my behalf should be lost by negligence of mine, real or apparent."

"Spoken like a Frenchman!" replied Monsieur de Vitray, embracing him. "It will be easy to find out this priest-slaying Walter Dixon after we have seen the duke, and I will accompany you in pursuit of him."

"That which is delayed," thought Henry Masterton, "is very often never performed at all;" but without further opposing Monsieur de Vitray's desire, he bade him good night, and retired to rest.

The following morning the young Cavalier rose earlier than he had lately done, and dressing himself in a suit of deep mourning, which had been made for him during his convalescence, and for which weeds of sorrow he had now the additional cause of a brother's death, he descended to the salle à manger of the dwelling, where he was soon after joined by Monsieur de Vitray. He was of course much paler than he had appeared in former days, from the long and severe illness he had undergone, but his beard and mustachios had had time to grow since his return from England, and in every respect, except the floating locks which distinguished the English Cavalier from the parliamentarian or Roundhead, and which when once cut off required years of care to regain, he had reassumed the appearance of his rank and character.

Monsieur de Vitray, who set no small store by dress, however much his own verged occasionally into the absurd, congratulated the young Lord Masterton upon his appearance; and after having breakfasted, they set out together for the Hotel de Ville, to which place the Duke de Longueville and his family had removed, to favour one of the manœuvres of the Fronde.

A multitude of other cavaliers had arrived before them, as was evident from the number of servants and horses which thronged round the Perron of the Hotel de Ville. Few carriages were seen, and fewer still of chairs, announcing that the assembly then meeting was

held by the duke himself; and that the hour had not yet arrived for his lovely duchess, formerly the beautiful Marie de Bourbon, to show herself to the world.

Every servant who lingered there with his lord's horses had some ornament of a particular kind of blue, the peculiar colour of the Fronde, about his person, and many a stare of lackeyish impudence was turned upon the page of the young Cavalier, as he appeared among the rest, habited, like his lord, in deep mourning, without any of the marks of party on his person.

Monsieur de Vitray and his friend dismounted at the steps; and entering the great vestibule, which was filled by a buzzing murmuring crowd, they made their way to the staircase which led to the apartments assigned to Monsieur and Madame de Longueville. The first door of those private apartments was opened to them by a servant in livery, and admitted them into an antechamber, whence a second door, opened by themselves, led them to a large hall, which they found occupied by about a hundred persons, grouped together in separate knots, each talking and gesticulating with all the vehemence of faction, "all sound and fury, signifying nothing."

It is not my purpose here to give a detailed account, or rather I should say a series of portraits of the leaders of the Fronde, most of whom have, within the recollection of us all, distinguished themselves in a nobler sphere; but when the young Lord Masterton had entered, Monsieur de Vitray called his attention to them, one by one, as they stood in the centre of their different groups, each surrounded by his crowd of friends and dependants, who, in the excited spirit of a turbulent epoch, looked up to their several chiefs with devoted attachment. Nevertheless, it must not be supposed that this attachment deviated at all into awe; so far from it indeed was the state of the case, that every partisan deemed it his privilege, though he would have followed his leader to death in the field, to turn him into ridicule in the saloon if he thought fit.

The first group that the two new comers passed was

placed in the angle of a window near the door, and surrounded the person of the well-known Marquis de Noirmoutier, who, booted and cuirassed, notwithstanding the existence of a truce, seemed ever ready for the field. He was giving an account, at the moment, of a skirmish near St. Denis, and was painting in high and exaggerated colours the bravery of the Parisians, and in terms little less flattering was speaking of himself.

"So then you see, Monsieur de Jaunier," he continued, addressing a little dingy atrabilious looking personage, who was the ostensible listener, "so then you see, the enemy, repulsed in all points, went off to the right, while leading up our horse beyond the little field of vines—you know the vineyard belonging to Francier the eschevin—well, leading up our horse beyond that field, we charged the enemy; but at that moment an unlucky ball killed my horse, and, thrown to the ground, I was surrounded by the enemy, who, more like pickpockets than soldiers, would have stripped me in a short time, had not our cavaliers come up. As it was, they tore from me a part of my accoutrements, which has hung at my side in many a bloody day."

"Monsieur means that he lost his *haut de chausse*," said the person he addressed, turning to the rest of the party; and the young Englishman had only time to hear Noirmoutier explain, amid the laughter of the rest, that it was the sheath of his sword that he had lost, when Monsieur de Vitray proceeded onward. His guide stopped for a moment, however, at another group, not far from the first, where a handsome but slightly made gentleman was conversing in a much quieter tone with four or five men of far more distinguished appearance than the rest. He was speaking with apparent ease and grace; but the moment he perceived Monsieur de Vitray and the young Cavalier with their eyes fixed upon him, he paused and coloured, then advanced a step, and bowed to Henry's companion, slightly noticing by the same inclination the young Englishman himself.

"That is the Prince de Marsillac,"* said Monsieur

* Better known as La Rochefoucault, author of the famous Maxims.

de Vitray. "Will you come and speak with him?" and without waiting for a reply, he led the way into the group, and introduced his friend.

"While Monsieur de Longueville, the Duke de Bouillon, and even your friend Monsieur d'Elbeuf, Monsieur de Vitray, are conversing in the inner chamber for the good of the nation, we are here trying to solve enigmas," said the prince, after the first salutation. "Here is De la Mothe asks what is the blackest spot in the human heart? I cannot tell, I say, because there are so many, that to my eyes it seems all black together. Can you tell, De Vitray?"

"Faith, I cannot tell, Monsieur le Prince," replied the other. "For my part, I like to look upon the bright side of things, and the heart of a true Frenchman is to me all light."

"All lightness you mean, De Vitray," answered the prince; and as the other with a shake of the head and a smile took his leave and walked on, La Rochefoucault looked after him laughing, "Do you know," he asked of the Marshal de la Mothe who stood by him, "do you know the principle on which that good soul adores France as he does?"

"Faith, not I," answered the other; "without it be a combination of patriotism and madness."

"Not a whit, not a whit," replied La Rochefoucault. "He adores France because he adores himself, and because he is a Frenchman: and after all, my dear De la Mothe, what is patriotism? Is it not that we love our country because it is ours—because it has something to do with us? It is all self—self—self. Tell me, when Cato fled to Utica, was it Rome that Cato loved, or Cato? No, no, La Mothe, if he had loved Rome, he would have staid in Rome, and done the best for her that he could. But Cato was his Rome, and so he carried Rome to Utica."

"You speak in riddles, Monsieur le Prince," answered the marshal.

"Perhaps I do," replied La Rochefoucault, turning away; "but look! Monsieur de Vitray is going to in-

terrupt the profound consultation of our noble leaders; for which Monsieur d'Elbeuf will thank him, and Monsieur de Bouillon will wish him at the devil; simply because the one is never so happy as when he is standing on tiptoe, and because the other has the gout so bad, he has no toes to stand upon."

Monsieur de Vitray did, indeed, as the other remarked, venture to pass the limits of the great saloon in which the party was assembled, and to enter a chamber, the door of which stood half-open, at the extremity of the great hall. When, however, he perceived the several commanders-in-chief of the *army of the king under the orders of parliament*, as it was called, sitting together in close consultation, he was about to draw back; but the Duke d'Elbeuf chanced to perceive his entrance, and instantly beckoned him forward. "Come in! come in! De Vitray," he exclaimed. "We have done, or nearly done—Have we not, messieurs?"

"As your highness thinks fit," replied Monsieur de Bouillon with a bitter sneer; "the princes of the house of Loraine always make shorter work of their affairs than other men." Thus saying, he rose from his seat, and bowing distantly to Monsieur de Vitray, turned upon his heel.

The Duke of Longueville rose also, and welcomed Henry and his companion with more warmth and courtesy. The young Englishman, seeing evidently that their coming had interrupted business of far more serious import, soon brought his audience to an end; and, after having returned his thanks to the duke for the honourable post he had conferred upon him, and requested permission to absent himself yet for a short time from its duties, he took leave and turned towards the door. Monsieur de Vitray, however, had still his compliment to make, which occupied a longer space; and, before it was concluded, one after another had dropped in from without, so that the room was full, and the consultation for the day was of course at an end. Nevertheless, it had probably been carried as far as the Duke of Longueville thought necessary, for, without

looking in the least like a man who had been interrupted malapropos, he listened to Monsieur de Vitray with a patient smile, and only cut across his speech by demanding his opinion on some subject whereon the other was really calculated to judge. The duke then slightly alluded to the reports that were already current in Paris regarding the death of the young Cavalier's brother; but he did so delicately, as a man of good breeding and of the world, seeming to speak of it more in a tone of condolence than inquisitiveness.

Henry replied briefly, as also did Monsieur de Vitray; but as the latter was taking his leave, the duke—instigated perhaps by more curiosity than *bienséance* permitted him to show before the young Englishman—requested his companion, in a low voice, to sup in the apartments of the duchess that night, an invitation to which Monsieur de Vitray replied by a low inclination and a promise to comply.

As he left that chamber, however, and proceeded to the one beyond, he took far more pains than necessary to explain to the young English nobleman, that the cause of his not having been included in the Duke of Longueville's invitation arose solely from consideration for the recent loss he had suffered. "France is a country, my young friend," he said, "where politeness and attention to strangers is carried to the very height of refinement. Now some people might think that the duke would have done better to invite you; but he, on the contrary, at once comprehending how impossible it was for you to accept, and yet how difficult it would be to refuse a prince of the blood, or rather a princess of the blood, would not put you to the pain of—"

At that moment some one laid his hand upon the worthy marquis's arm, and turning round, he saw himself—and, by changing his position, exposed to the sight of Henry Masterton—the figure of a person whom neither of them had expected to meet in that place. It was that of a tall florid handsome man, considerably past the middle age, but still hale and hearty, and with an air of frank and easy independence which spoke

him as free from bodily infirmity as from the difficulties of station. He was habited in a suit of dark marone cloth, was exquisitely neat in all his apparel, and wore one of those large wigs which, though common, and I might say universal in our own days, were then rare. His countenance was one not easily forgotten, and Henry Masterton instantly remembered the General St. Maur, whom he had seen a year before in company with Sir Andrew Fleming.

"Monsieur de Vitray!" he said, pressing the hand of the marquis: "but here is one surely whom I am bound to welcome too, and to thank for good service done in former days. You look cold, young gentleman; do I not see Master Henry Masterton?"

"Not three days ago, sir," replied Henry, "you would have been perfectly right in speaking to me by that name; but I am sorry to say that, since that time, I have a sad right to call myself Lord Masterton."

"Indeed!" exclaimed the old officer; "indeed! has that great busybody Death been inviting such young guests to his house, and taking no heed of such meet and worthy company as you and me, De Vitray?" The marquis looked a little hurt, but the other continued, "Good faith, but this is sad though! I deemed not that 'the grim abhorred monster' would yet for many a day have knocked at the door of the gay young gallant whom I saw the other morning riding by St. Denis in all the pride of that cowardly thing life. In some of these cursed squabbles, doubtless, he fell?"

Henry was silent, and he would have given much to have kept his friend quiescent also; but Monsieur de Vitray lost no time in drawing the general into a corner, and whispering in his ear the whole detail of the late Lord Masterton's death; nor did he want the gratification in return of seeing in the old officer's countenance as much of astonishment, horror, and concern as he could possibly expect.

"And poor Fleming!" exclaimed General St. Maur, when the other concluded, "to die thus at last! Yet I cannot but grieve for that unhappy boy, cut off in the

midst of his youth, and, unhappily, in the midst of his sins. 'Tis ever thus in the world; we cast from us pure gold, catch at the tinsel, and die just as we are learning to distinguish the one from the other. However, my Lord Masterton, the solitude in which I live, and the circumstance of Paris, which—with reverence be it spoken in this place—puts me in mind of the stomach in the revolt of the members, and is likely to get no food without she conform—and the circumstance of Paris, I say, shutting her gates against friends and foes, have prevented me from hearing this sad news sooner, and consequently, I am afraid, have made me guilty of great rudeness in a note sent to Monsieur de Vitray last night, of which my intention, as far as yourself are concerned, was quite innocent."

"I certainly was not aware, sir, of having personally given you any offence," replied the young Cavalier; "nor am I yet informed how any such offence was offered to you by my brother."

"Why, sir, I was somewhat like a certain friend of mine, who went out to shoot wolves," replied the old officer, "and hearing that there was a wolf in a belt of planting, he fired into it at the first rustle, and killed one of his own cows. Now, I had heard a good deal of your brother, sir,—I would not wound your feelings; but that which I did hear did not make me much covet his acquaintance. I never think it right to do any thing by halves; and when my good friend here proposed to introduce to me Lord Masterton, I, fancying it to be a man I did not approve, returned such an answer as was likely to put an end to the business at once.—And now, my young friend, will you accept an old soldier's apology, offered frankly? If you do not," he added with a smile, "you shall have to ask the honour, and the pleasure, and the felicity of my acquaintance, most humbly, I can assure you, before I grant it."

"I will do myself no such injustice as to reject now what may be indeed difficult to gain hereafter," replied Henry; "the more especially," he added, "as I am charged with a letter for you, which I might find no

opportunity of delivering to you afterward, were I once to set off on the long and weary search which I am afraid is before me."

"A long and weary search!" exclaimed the old officer; "I love a search beyond all things, and am the most skilful of searchers. Let me assist you, I beseech you, Lord Masterton. I will lay you down such a plan of your campaign that, depend upon it, you shall be as victorious as Condé, even though your enemy were Turenne."

"I am afraid," replied Henry, with a smile, "that you cannot assist me, my dear sir. I have unfortunately lost sight of some dear friends in a distant part of France; and if I cannot regain the clew at Paris, I shall be obliged to return into Brittany, and set out again from whence I began. In the mean time, will you inform me when and where I can deliver this letter; for it is one of great importance, I am told; and also I must deliver it alone."

"Alone!" replied Monsieur de St. Maur; "I am not worth stabbing, or I should think you had some design upon my poor life. However, what will you say to dining with me this clear frosty day? I will despatch my business with Monsieur de Longueville. You get the letter; and a short ride out of the city to St. Maur will not do you any harm.—But let me ask you first, whom is the letter from?"

Henry whispered in his ear the name of Ireton, at which the other started, and showed no small symptoms of surprise. "Will you come?" he repeated, eagerly; "will you come, my Lord Masterton?"

"I would fain you could name some other day," replied the young Cavalier; "at present my mind is but little attuned to society; and I have also some business to transact in the town—the day after to-morrow perhaps?"

"Nay, I must become your suitor," replied the general; "you *must* come to-day, my young friend—I will receive you alone—you shall name your own hour for dinner, so that you may have time for all affairs; and

you shall see no one at my house without you like it. But that letter is of much importance: I would fain receive it this day, and I would fain receive it in my own dwelling; for I do not know what effect it may have either on my mood or my movements."

"If such be the case, of course I cannot refuse," replied Henry. "Between this and two o'clock—though that be somewhat late for your dinner, I am afraid—but between this and two I doubt not I shall be able to accomplish all I have to do in Paris, and also reach your dwelling. But you must give me the address correctly: remember, I am a stranger here."

"Two of my men shall accompany you," said Monsieur de Vitray; "it is not very safe to travel in these times without society, though one may have a pass in one's pocket, and a sword by one's side. They, too, will show you the way."

"So let it be, then," said the old officer; "at two I will expect you:" and making his way forward to Monsieur de Longueville, he left Henry and his companion to quit the saloon, and seek their horses in the Place de Grève.

CHAPTER XVII.

The dwelling of Major-general Walter Dixon was by no means difficult to discover, the officers of police, in whose custody he had remained for several hours, having ascertained his abode with great precision. The style of life which he led in Paris was precisely what might have been expected from his character and circumstances. He lived well, though not splendidly; but still so much better than most of his countrymen who had been driven abroad by the civil wars, that many a poor Cavalier of rank was glad to sit down to the table of the ci-devant Roundhead. Walter Dixon

had indeed never been very vehement in his politics, and he now affected an inclination towards loyalty, which gave the loyalists good hope of rendering him a convert. His object in thus making friends with the English in Paris might be the general one which he invariably kept before his eyes, of providing support of all kinds against future contingencies, and it might be also that he had some design of employing any of the more daring and unscrupulous of his countrymen—many of whom would at that time have sold their lives for a dinner—in forwarding those parts of his purpose against Sir Andrew Fleming which were not particularly smiled upon by the law. In these enterprises, it must be remarked, he never employed his own servants, and the person who performed any dangerous service for him was well rewarded for his exertions, but had no opportunity of accumulating many such claims upon his employer. In almost all instances, however, Walter Dixon endeavoured to accomplish whatever he undertook with his unassisted arm as far as there was any probability of success; judging the risk to his person at the time as nothing compared with that attendant upon making his views known to any one else.

The house of the worthy parliamentarian was in the best part of the city, and the servant who attended the summons of the young Cavalier was one of those whom he had seen in the boat which had brought him to Calais. His master, however, he replied, had ridden out; and as no information was to be obtained concerning the hour of his return, Henry Masterton was obliged to abandon his further inquiries for that day.

Returning to the hotel of Monsieur de Vitray, he furnished himself with the letter which had been intrusted to him for General St. Maur, and after waiting some time for a pass to ensure his safe egress and regress of the gates of Paris, he set out on one of Monsieur de Vitray's high-dressed horses, which the worthy Frenchman insisted upon his using, as more easy in its paces than his own uncultivated Breton. Two well-armed servants also accompanied him, together with

his page; and proceeding at a quick pace, they were soon out of the dull and narrow streets of the city, and enjoying the blessed aspect of the country.

It was a clear frosty day, with the sky blue and serene, and the sun shining afar with unusual splendour upon all the sparkling frostwork which begemmed every leaf of grass and incrusted every naked bough. The whole prospect was white and glistening, and there was a vigorous freshness in the air, which seemed to bring the body into tone with the scene, and give it power to enjoy even the cold aspect of the winter. It is true that not a leaf was to be seen upon the trees: all the green garmenture of summer was gone. Every drop of water was covered with a hard dark coat of ice, and the birds sitting melancholy in the trees, appeared as dull black meaningless spots amid the glittering whiteness of the world. The voice of nature too was silent; there was no gay hum of the insect world abroad, and all the music of the birds was reduced to the sweet shrill petitioning song of the familiar robin, as, sitting fearless on a spray, he poured his plaintive ditty on the path. Yet still there was something in the scene that was cheerful. The glorious sun was shining—the great, bright, mighty light-giver was smiling upon the world; and though power was not given to his beams to melt the icy fetters in which nature lay, he changed them with magic power to gems of every hue, and made the congealed world sparkle with his golden rays.

The young Englishman felt revived by the sight of nature's unencumbered face, and the fresh air gave him new vigour as he rode along. The spring of health seemed to open again in his bosom, and hope, which depends too much upon bodily sensation, rose up with every stronger beat of his own heart. The road which he followed was not particularly beautiful, but at length it turned back towards the Seine which it had quitted, and climbing the brow of a high hill, passed by a stone wall encircling a considerable tract of ground which sloped down towards the river from the summit

of the ascent. What was beyond the wall was hardly to be distinguished through the thick trees that bordered the high road, but every now and then a glimpse was caught of smooth lawns, and long fine avenues, and majestic masses of deep wood, looking black and stern even through the hoary covering of the winter.

At length, approaching a massy gate of wrought iron, one of the servants who followed rode up, and informed Lord Masterton that the entrance of the dwelling he sought was before him, and opening the grille, as it was called, they passed into the principal avenue of the park. Exquisite taste had apparently been employed to give perfection to every thing which the eye now met; and continual care and attention were evidently busy at all seasons, to keep the whole regular and neat. Not a leaf from the trees was to be seen encumbering the ground. The road was as smooth and even as if it were the height of summer, the grass was close shaven, and as even as velvet, and the different flowering shrubs that stood waiting to burst forth in beauty in the spring, were all carefully protected from the frosty air.

The house itself was not visible at first, but after proceeding for about half a mile down the avenue, Henry Masterton came upon a neat, well-finished dwelling of white stone, perhaps too small for the size of the property, which seemed well deserving of as splendid a château as any in France; but there was an air of comfort and simplicity in the low but elegant house of the old English officer that made up for the want of higher pretensions. The view was most beautiful; the situation on which it had been placed, half-way down the slope of the hill towards the river, commanding the whole windings of the Seine and the rich country through which it flows, with the distant metropolis breaking the line beyond. In the foreground were rich wooded banks, with many a beautiful walk down to the river; while up the different brakes of the wood, which swept round the lawn in front, might be caught the perspective of long avenues and deep glades, and other lawns beyond.

Round about were a variety of animals of different kinds: three or four peacocks were perched among the branches of some evergreens enjoying the short glimpse of sunshine, and two light greyhounds came forward with their elastic steps towards the stranger as he alighted at the door.

The sound of his horse's feet had brought out two servants, and it was clear that his host had arrived before him, by the ready and expecting manner with which one of the grooms took his beast; while the other, leading the young Cavalier through a large vestibule, the pillars of which were decked with the arms of all ages and nations, conducted him into a small but elegant library. There was nobody there, but the servant said he would inform his master of his lordship's arrival, and closing the door, left Henry to his own thoughts.

The room was filled with books of many kinds, all arranged in great order; but the object which first attracted and then absorbed the whole of Henry Masterton's attention was the solitary picture which occupied the greater part of one side of the room: it was a full-length portrait of a very lovely woman, painted by Antonio Vandyke. Her figure was full of easy grace, but yet there was a certain degree of languor in it that gave the idea of delicate health; and though Henry had first looked at it but as a very beautiful specimen of art, there seemed to grow a deeper interest in the picture as he gazed. The delicate hand leaned upon a marble table on which were scattered various flowers, some budding, some full-blown, and some withered; and underneath them the painter, with a bold and easy hand, had written the word "*Spes.*" There seemed a vague moral in it; and Henry could not help feeling that there is ever something intrinsically sad in a portrait. What can they be, but records of past hopes and broken affections? and even if the originals still live, they are monuments to years that can never return—to health, to strength, to vigour, to charms, to graces that have fled! But still Henry gazed: there was a soft

and living gentleness in those liquid hazel eyes that seemed to touch his heart with solemn and melancholy feelings. They seemed to speak of love and tenderness gone by and swallowed up by the devouring tomb; and, associating with all his own hopes and dreams, the language of those calm moveless looks seemed to comment on the transitory brevity of all the finest and noblest ties which bind heart to heart, the evanescence of the sweetest feelings that mingle in the bitter cup of life. But no, the portrait stood before him a record of memory and undying affection. "Surely," he thought, "if human hands can preserve for the corporeal eye a living likeness, like that, of a form that has long been dead, the spirit, the eternal spirit, may bear into another state the picture of a spirit that it loved, painted deep amid the memories of the world that it leaves behind. If in another state we forget all our actions and our feelings here, we should not be the same beings that were here, for identity of existence can but be proved by the mind's own comparison of the past and the present; and if we remember at all, surely we shall remember those we loved. Oh, no! he who has loved such a being as that, and such a spirit as speaks from those eyes, can never forget—no, not in the tomb!"

While he yet gazed and thought, the door opened, and General St. Maur entered. "That picture," he said, remarking the direction of the young Cavalier's eyes, without any other salutation, "that picture was very like: It is that of my wife—now an angel in heaven. People wonder that, feeling towards her as I did, and feeling towards her still as I do—that is to say, loving her with the same deep fervid affection which I bore towards her while she was yet on earth—they wonder that I like to have her picture always before my eyes, and say that it must call up melancholy remembrances—and talk a great deal of nonsense of a similar kind. Far from calling up any melancholy remembrances—it calls up sweet and bright ones, and wakens hopes and expectations still brighter.

As I sit here, and read, and write, and think, it seems as if the spirit of my departed angel contemplated me making my way forward to the goal where we shall meet again; and as if she were smiling encouragement upon my onward path. So much for that. And now, my young friend, where is Master Ireton's letter? How fares he?—'Tis a year and a half since I heard of him, and as I then treated the counsel he kindly gave me of his own accord as badly as if I had asked for it—that is to say, did the direct contrary—I almost feared that I should not have further news of him."

"There is the letter, Monsieur de St. Maur," replied Henry, presenting it. "But I must explain to you how it came to be so long delayed on the road. In London I accidentally met the writer, of whom I know nothing personally, and finding that I was about to set out for France, he intrusted the packet to me. My first business, and principal duty, led me into Brittany, in search of some who are very dear to me; I found the convent in which I had left them burnt down, and a letter that had been left for me—to direct my farther steps, I presume—destroyed in the flames. I tracked them out however to Paris, but as I was just entering the city. I unfortunately got between two parties of the Frondeurs and Mazarinites, and received a wound in my shoulder which has kept me ever since confined a close prisoner to my chamber."

Monsieur de St. Maur listened while Henry spoke, without opening the letter. "You have been very unfortunate, indeed, my lord, in your first visit to Paris," he replied; "and I have been unfortunate in not having the pleasure of meeting with you sooner.—Will you permit me?"—and he broke the wax.

His eye fixed eagerly upon the contents, and as he read, a variety of changing expressions passed over his countenance. The letter was somewhat long, and the hand not easily deciphered, so that for five or ten minutes Henry Masterton had little occupation but in remarking the alternate light and shade that flitted over the countenance of his companion.

"This is news, indeed, my lord," he said, "and it

requires some consideration. For many years I have now been an exile from my native land, and deprived of my rightful property. This letter contains an offer of restoration to all that I possessed, without one condition that could compromise my feelings or my honour; but it is offered by a sect that I abhor, and by men who, I see plainly, not contented with freeing their country from a grievous yoke, will end by murdering their king. Of all of them, however, Ireton, though perhaps the most ferocious, is the most disinterested. He acts, I feel sure, on principle, and believes, while he stains his hands deep in blood, that he is barely doing his duty. However, the matter requires some thought, for since I last rejected a proposal somewhat similar, many a change has taken place which renders the offer more acceptable and the obstacles far fewer. But let us to dinner, my good lord, and we will talk over old days—I shall treat you frugally—no sumptuous table is to be found in my house."

As he spoke, the dinner was announced, and the old officer led his guest through a door of communication into the eating-room, which was light and cheerful, and warmed by a blazing fire of beech-wood. The dinner, though simple, was excellently cooked, and excellently served; the wines were fine, and every thing spoke the same careful regularity that the whole house displayed, and yet nothing showed a rigorous or exacting master. The servants seemed to watch his looks with affection, as well as respect, and a cloud never came over his countenance while speaking to any of them.

The dinner passed over, and a dessert of different kinds of nuts and dried fruits was placed upon the table, with some finer wines. There was one thing, however, which Henry had remarked during dinner; namely, that the servants had brought in and carried out the dishes through the door which opened into the library, neglecting two other doors which apparently led into the vestibule. At one of these doors, he had more than once heard a noise as if of a child endeavouring to come in, and as the servants were putting the last dishes of the dessert upon the table, one of them

seemed to forget the way by which he usually entered, and suddenly opened the one from whence the sounds had proceeded. The moment he did so, with a whine of exquisite delight, a beautiful black spaniel of King Charles's breed rushed joyfully into the room. Lord Masterton expected to see it fly to the chair of the general, but at once it sprang towards himself, leaped into his lap, and to his surprise and joy, he found his own beautiful dog Rupert caressing him, wild with pleasure and affection.

Both Henry and the general started on their feet, and while the young Cavalier fixed his wondering eyes upon his companion, as if demanding an explanation, the old officer exclaimed, "It's all over now! It's all over! Rupert, you dog, you're a traitor!"

Henry's heart beat quick and fast, and well it might; for through the open door he saw another beyond, on the farther side of the vestibule, through which a form was advancing towards him that needed no second glance to make his whole frame thrill. "Gracious Heaven!" he exclaimed, starting forward; "is it possible? Emily! my beloved!"

Emily only answered by gliding on to meet him, and in another moment he held her to his heart. The servants stood round perhaps in some astonishment, while Monsieur de St. Maur looked on, upon the joy that sparkled in the eyes of the lovers, with no small expression of delight in his own.

"There, there, my good friends!" he said to the attendants, at length, "you have had your treat too. The play is over! Now, Robin, set down that dish here. You, Peter, place a seat for the Lady Emily. We will not lose our dessert because she comes to interrupt us. Some one offer my homage to the Lady Margaret, and tell her that her company will add to our delight. Now, shut the doors—Rupert, down, sir! You are a traitor, and have betrayed the secrets of the garrison—and I cannot help suspecting that fair lady too of conniving at the treason."

"Indeed, my dear father, I could not help it," replied

Emily; "Rupert knew that his master was in the house from the first moment his foot crossed the threshold, and he was so anxious to see him, that—"

"That his mistress was scarcely more so—hey?" demanded the general: "but I forgive you, my sweet child, and share all your joy to the utmost."

Emily threw her arms round the neck of the old officer, and printed a kiss upon his cheek, that made the blood come rushing with violence into that of Henry Masterton; for though the half of a century must have been some years past with Monsieur de St. Maur, yet he was still both young and handsome enough to cause a pang of jealousy to dart through the heart of the young Cavalier, on seeing such an endearment bestowed upon another. He gazed with astonishment—Emily caught his eye, and blushed, saying, "I had forgot!"—but there was so much pure innocence in her blush, and in the smile that accompanied it, that Henry felt there could be no evil in that action which had called it up. Still, however, it was extraordinary; but Monsieur de St. Maur put an end at once to all further doubt.

"My Lord Masterton," he said, "it was my intention to have given you a few hours longer to wait, and to have forced you to tell me the object of the search you have more than once mentioned, before I led you to that object itself; but this faithful beast has betrayed the secret too soon. And now I see, by the kiss she gave me but now, this dear girl, if she has not betrayed another secret, has—But here comes Lady Margaret! Before you say a word, fair dame, be witness of what I do. Emily, my beloved, give me your hand—there, Henry Masterton," he added, placing that fair small hand in his, "I give it to you, for the first time that it has ever been rightfully given, and that by a title which no one can deny—the right of her own father! Yes, young gentleman, I am William Lord Langleigh, of whom you may have heard."

"Good God! is it possible!" exclaimed the other; "often, often have I heard of him; but I ever heard that he was drowned in making his escape from England."

"To explain that would require a long story, which must be told hereafter," replied Lord Langleigh, dropping the serious and dignified tone he had assumed, and turning playfully towards Lady Margaret, "Now, my dear cousin, bridle your impatience no longer, but bless him, as I know you have been longing to do—bless him, as he stands there, holding the hand of that dear girl who owes so much to his courage and activity."

"I do bless him!" answered Lady Margaret.—"Bless thee, bless thee, my dear son; for nobly and generously hast thou acted, in circumstances of difficulty and danger, when you had to contend against many things; but above all, with the ardent passions of your own heart. Bless you! I say, bless you! and well, and surely, and confidently did I feel that Heaven would repay, in full measure, every act of self-denial you practised, when self-denial was most hard. But how is it, Henry, how is it, my son, that we have so long expected your return to us in vain?"

"True, true!" said Lord Langleigh; "though they have heard all that you told me this morning, they do not yet know how you happened not to find them as immediately as they fully intended you should. Come, come, my lord, explain all the circumstances; leave no day unaccounted for, or we shall be jealous. Ha, Emily! do you love him well enough to be jealous?"

"Too well, my dear father!" she answered, and Henry proceeded with his tale.

That tale is already well known, and does not at all merit any review. Nevertheless, though it was told minutely, there were still many questions to be asked; for every trifling circumstance that befell Henry Masterton was of deep interest in the eyes of Emily Langleigh. How he had followed their track so far was matter of surprise; but how he had missed them at length was easily accounted for, as they had not entered Paris at all, but had turned aside, through some of the cross-roads that intersect the country in the neighbourhood of the metropolis, and had proceeded to

St. Maur, without venturing within the walls of the beleaguered capital.

"And now," said Henry Masterton, as he concluded, "let me, too, ask some explanations. Has my dear Emily all along known the existence of her father? for if she has, she has concealed her knowledge with wonderful discretion."

"Fy, Henry! that sounds very like a reproach," replied Emily; "but I will tell you, nevertheless, that I did not know that my father was in being till he suddenly appeared at the convent in which you left us at Dinan."

"Then, by what happy miracle, my lord, did you hear of your daughter being in France?" demanded Henry; "for without a miracle I can hardly understand how so fortunate a circumstance came about."

"That will form a part of the history I intend to give you to-morrow," replied Lord Langleigh; "but, in the mean time, I have news for you, my beloved girl, and news which has been brought me by our dear friend here. My old head now shall take counsel by your young one. The English council of state offer, by Ireton here, under his own hand, to restore to me my honours and estates in England. The attainder, indeed, which struck my name is already reversed; but they offer me back my beautiful estates of Penford-bourne."

"Of Penford-bourne!" exclaimed Henry Masterton: "then it was from you that the base Lord Ashkirk wrested those rich domains where I and my unhappy brother tarried so long?"

"Even so," answered Lord Langleigh. "Penford-bourne and Langleigh Castle, the old ruin on the height, were mine till that false knave, partly by betraying what he knew, partly by inventions of his own, made my king and my peers believe that my designs were those of a traitor, when my most zealous intentions were those of a patriot. There have I passed many happy hours; and when I stood there last, Henry Masterton, it was as the second of the very

man to whom those lands had come in the course of time, when he drew his sword against your own brother. But, again, I will not enter now upon those histories. They offer to restore me those estates.—Say, Emily, shall I accept them now?—A similar offer I refused before, in consideration of my wretched friend Sir Andrew Fleming, to whose wife they had descended—but his death has removed that obstacle."

"First, tell me why you hesitate, my dear father," replied Emily.

"Because, my sweet child, the people who offer them back again," said Lord Langleigh, "have, in my eyes, no power, no right so to act. They are neither my peers who took those estates from me, my king who bestowed them on another, nor really and truly the representatives of the nation, whose will is law. Those who offer them back are but a junto of upstarts, among whom are some honest and sincere men, some wise and talented ones, some fools, some hypocrites, and many knaves. Such is the council of state that offers, and what is the House of Commons that must confirm their decrees? any thing but the representation of the British people. It is a packed jury, from which, since its misnamed purification by Colonel Pride, all that is honest, honourable, wise, and manly is excluded. It is a congregation of knaves and fools, where the knaves rule and the fools give their consent. Upon the voice of these two bodies must your father's restoration to his estates be founded. But remember, those estates are large, and though to me, whose habits are formed, and whose life draws near a close, such things are nothing—yourself and your future husband, to whom they must descend, may see with different eyes, and decide from different feelings."

Emily coloured slightly, then turned her eyes to those of Henry Masterton, by whose side she sat, and at once reading her answer there, she replied, "Do not accept them, my dear father!—do not accept them!"

"Well, then," replied Lord Langleigh, without fur-

ther thought, "that matter is settled. We shall have fully enough for happiness, my children—what need we more?"

"Nothing, nothing!" replied Henry Masterton, boldly, "nothing!"

"Nothing indeed!" echoed Emily, as she fixed her eyes upon him.

"The light is waning," said Lord Langleigh as he looked from the window; "but, my dear Henry, I do not intend to let you ever separate from us again. Here must be your home."

"I have with me two servants of our good friend Monsieur de Vitray," replied the young Cavalier doubtingly, but with willingness to comply sparkling from his eyes.

"So much the better," rejoined the earl; "send them back with your excuses, and they will keep each other company on the road. Bid them tell good De Vitray that you are fully of opinion that France is the most exquisite land in the world, but that you love the country better than the town, and I will warrant that he takes all in good part."

Henry was in no mood to create objections; the earl's plan was adopted, the young Cavalier staid, and in the society of all that made life dear to him passed one of the brightest evenings of his life.

CHAPTER XVIII.

I MUST now, for a very brief space, change the scene, and lead the reader into the interior of a house at which he only stopped for a moment in the morning to inquire for Walter Dixon.

It was about nine o'clock on the night of the same day, when at a table in a small but elegantly furnished room sat Major-general Dixon, while a servant, stand-

ing in silence behind his chair, watched attentively all his movements, to be able without a word to change his plate, to bring that dish or this, to pour his wine, or to remove one service and carry in another, still leaving uninterrupted the train of thought in which his master was indulging.

Although deeply engaged in reflection, the sage and considerate general did not neglect, in the indulgence of his mental faculties, to refresh his bodily powers, and of about ten dishes that at one time or other covered the table during his evening meal, he ate a portion of each, small indeed, but sufficient on the whole both to sate his appetite and to gratify his palate.

Nor was wine wanting; of the lighter sorts which accompanied the more solid food, he drank repeatedly, and at length, when his supper was concluded by the dessert, three bottles of ancient vintages which had seen the sun rise over the rich and flavour-giving Rhone, were set before him.

The servant piled more wood upon the fire, trimmed the tapers; and retiring, closed the door. Walter Dixon filled his glass, stretched out his feet, and was happy. By this time, he said to himself, my messenger is at Calais. Then, a fair wind and good speed, and he may reach London the day after to-morrow by nightfall. Then again, on Monday the council will meet, and they dare not now refuse me the estates—their last excuse is gone. Let me see!—I must sell that detached piece that comes down by the Stoure, to pay off the unmortgaged debts. It will surely fetch twenty thousand pounds, and then I shall have five thousand in hand. Well, and let Manuel take the mortgaged land, I would a thousand times sooner part with every farthing that my father wrung from the fists of the dull country knights, than lose one acre of Penford-bourne!

Such was the train of his thoughts, when they were interrupted by the opening of the door to give entrance to the same servant who had waited upon him during supper. Walter Dixon turned angrily towards him, exclaiming, "What now?"

"Master Manuel, sir, from London," replied the man, "craves to speak with your honour, if it will not disturb you."

"Hell sink him to the centre!" muttered Walter Dixon to himself; but then immediately added aloud, in a sweet gay voice, "What, Master Manuel!—where is he?—show him in instantly. Bring other glasses—set a chair by the fire—Welcome! welcome! my dear friend!" he continued, as the servant introduced the Jewish merchant, with whom we have already seen both Walter Dixon and Ireton consorting in London. "Welcome, welcome to Paris! Have you supped, Master Manuel? Well, then, you never refuse your share of a bottle, if it be of the best. Here, taste this Burgundy—To your health and prosperity, Master Manuel; and now, what brings you to the strange capital of this strange land?"

"Oh, you know, my good general," replied the other, as the servant retired and again closed the door, "all lands are the same to me; born in Portugal, educated in England, trading in France and Germany, and securing my money in Holland, all countries are mine alike. But, between you and me, I have come to Paris upon some loans that the great men here want to raise among the remnant of Israel.—Excellent good wine this, Master Dixon!—I think of carrying over some fine wines for my lord the general. But how go your own affairs? Any hope of the money for the bond? The interest is running high."

"Any hope, good Manuel?" answered Walter Dixon, with a smile of triumph; "the business is done—the money is as good as in your pocket, the estates are as good as in my hand."

"Ha! good news indeed!" cried the merchant, his face brightening at the name of money; "good news indeed. But how is all this, I pray you, good Master Dixon? You are a cunning man—you are a cunning man indeed. How have you contrived to remove all difficulties? Ha?"

"Accident—mere accident has done it all," replied

the other, who did not choose to inform his companion frankly of the share he himself had in the death of the Benedictine. "This Sir Andrew Fleming, on whose account you heard Ireton refuse me the estates—for though he puts it on the council, he is at the bottom of the affair,—well, this Sir Andrew Fleming was killed the day before yesterday in a chance affray with a mad young English lord, who had run away with his wife. Without loss of time I got the legal proofs of his death, and sent them off to the council with an humble petition and remonstrance, much like those with which they treat the fool parliament. But what makes thee look so dull, man? take another glass, good Manuel. Why shakest thou thy head? Ha?"

"Because I fear it will not do," answered the other—"because I fear it will not do."

"But I tell thee it must do!" answered Walter Dixon, striking his hand upon the table with anger at the very thought of failure.—"But I tell thee it must do—they cannot, they dare not refuse me! There is now no objection; they have pledged themselves by all that is sacred; and besides," he added, the same triumphant smile again illumining his features, "besides, I do not alone claim the estates from their bounty—I claim them by law, man!—I claim them by law! as next of kin to the Lady Eleanor Fleming, the heiress of those estates. Nay, shake not your head—the Lady Eleanor sleeps sound too—the sod is upon her head as well as his; I say again, shake not your head, Manuel—all is provided for, I tell thee; though I know thy difficult and doubting mind of old. You will say that Sir Andrew Fleming claimed the estates after her, and that if he survived but for a minute, they went to his heirs, not hers. But I tell thee, no! man. They were but his for life, and then returned to the general heirs of her and of her father. I am the only one, and therefore I set both parliament and council at defiance."

"But listen, my good friend, listen," said Manuel; "I have news to tell you of various kinds, and somewhat that concerns yourself, Master Dixon, and which,

unfortunately, concerns me too. Well, there was money wanting in London as well as here in Paris, and so of course I was called upon, and when I assured their honourable worships that no money could be gained without something was offered as security, it was proposed, among other things, to forfeit or sequestrate the estates of all malignants, and sell them at the highest value."

"The villains did not—surely they did not proceed on such a scheme," exclaimed Walter Dixon, his eager eyes flashing fire as he spoke.

"No, no, no! that would never do," replied Manuel, "for the insecurity of such a purchase would have made them all go at a tenth of the price. However, a great many estates were named while the matter was being discussed, and among the rest Penford-bourne with the Manor of West Burington and the Stoure side flats thereunto attached. Well, and your own letters and memorials were brought forward to show that the Lady Eleanor Fleming was a malignant herself, and a fautor of rebellion and malignancy against the parliament; and that her husband being, like herself, a malignant and papist, was also a priest of Baal, and a sworn servant of the beast!—Ha, ha, ha! a sworn servant of the beast!—So the words went, I think;" and the worthy Hebrew seemed to ponder with internal satisfaction upon the sweet and charitable epithets which the Christians applied to each other. "Well," he continued, filling himself, unbidden, another bumper of Burgundy—"well, when that question was mooted, up got Master Ireton, and to do him but justice, he spoke like a man. He said that if those estates were forfeited at all, it behooved the council of state to remember that they had already been promised, in such case, to a worthy and God-fearing man (meaning you), who was heir and next of kin to the papistical malignants who at present held them. But at the same time he begged the council to consider whether they could be forfeited on account of the present possessors, inasmuch as they the present possessors had, as he conceived it,

no right or title whatever to the estates themselves: and then he went on to show that those estates had been taken by the man Charles Stuart, from a more godly and righteous man than himself, Lord Langleigh, and bestowed, without either law or reason, on an obdurate and flint-like papist, the Lord Ashkirk. Now, said he, it has been proved that these estates were then wrested from the Lord Langleigh, because he sought, even at the first hour, to do that which many holy men have at length accomplished in the seventh hour; and the lords have within the last six months reversed the attainder of the Lord Langleigh. Therefore, if he were not guilty, the law could not take the estates from an innocent man; and notwithstanding any thing that a tyrant might do in giving those estates to another, the real right of the property was still in him who had originally possessed them. And right well and eloquently he spoke thereon for the matter of two hours or thereabouts."

"And he might full as well have saved his breath," interrupted Walter Dixon; "the Lord Langleigh has been dead these eighteen years, and in lieu of his lands and tenements on *terra firma*, has a freehold of many a fair acre of the British Channel. Pshaw! what boots it reasoning of the dead?"

"But hear, Master Dixon! hear yet a while!" replied the merchant: "the council said as you say, and there was many a man to poo! and to pshaw! like yourself: but Master Ireton went on to say that not far from Paris lived a man called the General St. Maur, and that since, of latter times, many men had been coming and going between France and England, this General St. Maur had been seen of various worthy men who knew the Lord Langleigh in former days, and who declared these two persons, as they seemed, to be one and the same."

"Hold! hold! hold!" cried Walter Dixon, rising up, and pacing the chamber once or twice; "I have seen this St. Maur in Paris this very morning—and I have seen the Lord Langleigh, too, in former days—but I

saw him only once, and it is long since," and he paused, meditating, as if endeavouring to recall the appearance of the person of whom he spoke—"it may be!" he said, at length, "it may be! But have they any proof? Are they sure themselves? How did they decide?"

"Master Ireton seemed fully sure of what he said," replied the merchant; "and as to the council, they determined at once, that touching those estates, if the Lord Langleigb came forward and claimed them, it would but be an act of just restitution to give them back again to him, with such other honours and profitable employments as his former zeal and sufferings in the good cause well merited."

"Ha! they did? they did?" exclaimed the other, again pacing the chamber, but with more rapid and less steady steps; "they did? Well, then, Master Manuel," he continued, recovering himself, and filling his glass calmly, "here, I drink to your good health, and may you never come to need the sum you are like to lose by your humble servant Walter Dixon!"

"You are joking, Master Dixon! you are joking!" replied the other, with a slight degree of alarm touching the carelessness he sought to assume; "you are joking, I know."

"Faith, you are mistaken, good Jew!" answered the parliamentarian; "faith, you are mistaken: the matter is past a joke, both with you and me. Hark thee, Manuel!" he continued, advancing fiercely towards the other, as he saw him about to speak; "say not a word, or you will drive me mad. Villain! you could have prevented this! If you had but threatened to withhold your purse from the gripe of Ireton and the rest, they had as soon dared wrest from your friend—your debtor, if you will—the long-promised reward of his services, as—as—But be it on your own head. Small is your loss in comparison of mine; and it will teach you in future to be more free of your services when your word can avert so black a deceit."

"On my life—on my honour, Master Dixon, it was not my fault," replied the merchant; "I know those

men better than you do, far. All the difficulties Ireton and Cromwell raised concerning money were but that they might have their own way. Think you that Cromwell ever wants money? No, no! Where he gets it, how he manages his resources, I know not; but neither he nor Ireton are in my debt a stiver—as I live—upon my honour!"

"Honour!" repeated Walter Dixon, with a bitter sneer, that made the blood rush up even into the sallow cheek of the merchant.

"Come, come, Master Dixon," he exclaimed, "if you use me thus, I must speak a different language. You know that while there was the least chance of your bringing your plans to bear, I never pressed you for the payment of the bond; but now I must tell you, since all that is over, it must now be paid—fifteen thousand pounds, and interest since last January—I want the money—I cannot do without it! I can use it better!"

"Indeed!" answered the other, gazing on him with a smile full of contempt; "indeed! And now hear me, Master Manuel,—as you have heard my interests thwarted without supporting them, and come to dash all my hopes without raising new ones, I have to tell you there is but one way I can pay you—It is a speedy one; but one you may not like."

"How? how?" demanded the Jew.

Walter Dixon laid his finger on the hilt of his sword, saying calmly, "With steel, Master Manuel! with steel!"

"For that I am always prepared, when I walk the streets at night," answered the merchant, drawing a pistol partly from his bosom: "but I know you jest, General Dixon. You have many other ways of paying me, as you well know, and I must insist on immediate payment, as I need the cash."

"And how do you intend to enforce your mighty demand?" asked the parliamentarian; "you forget, my good friend, that here we stand in Paris, in a foreign

land, that will no more take cognizance of your claim, than of the cabala of your forefathers."

"'Tis you forget, Master Dixon," answered the other; "in that simple piece of paper your bond is inserted, not only the humble name of Hezekiah Manuel, but that of François du Four, a French citizen, residing in Paris, and my partner. So that, if you drove us to sue you, which sure I am so honourable a gentleman will not, we can recover even here."

"You are prepared, I see, for all events," answered Walter Dixon, with another bitter smile; "and therefore, doubtless, you will not be surprised when I tell you, that of the fifteen thousand pounds which you demand I have in that drawer the sum of one hundred louis, which is all that I possess on earth. Now, Master Manuel?" and he laid his hand hard upon his shoulder, and gazed him full in the face.

"You jest, sir! you jest!" exclaimed the merchant, throwing off his hand, and starting up with a look of dismay. "But the silver plate you showed me only the day before you set off—"

"Is sold, every ounce!" answered the parliamentarian calmly.

"And the house in Grace church-street, and the lands near Ashford?" added the other, in a more doubtful tone.

"Mortgaged to the last penny," replied the other.

"God of Abraham!" cried the Jew in a tone of self-abasement indescribable, "I have been cheated by a Christian! But surely, surely, Master Dixon—"

"Surely and certainly, it is as I tell you," interrupted the other; "and therefore, without you can point out some way in which a desperate man may raise money, you are as far from the payment you require as you are from Abraham's bosom."

"I will not believe that it is all sold!" cried the merchant suddenly; "you had no time, Master Dixon; I examined well the rolls. It cannot be mortgaged, nor can the silver plate be sold."

"I will soon convince you," replied the other, and

proceeding to a cabinet, he took from one of the drawers two slips of paper, the one being an account of various articles of plate sold to John Wilson, William Stuart, and Henry Toogood, and various others of the Goldsmiths' company, and the other a receipt for title deeds, given up conditionally to a mortgage.

The merchant held them in his hand a moment, glaring upon Walter Dixon with no very charitable feeling. He then returned them, saying bitterly, "Man, you have undone me! Your estates will not sell now in these troublous times for half the amount to which you mortgaged them. Every thing has fallen in value, and is falling still. I have made bad speculations. A bill comes due next month for twenty thousand pounds, and I have not seven prepared. Fool that I was, to take money on any man's bond without better security!"

"And still greater fool," interrupted Walter Dixon fiercely, "to hear the very estates on which you knew your creditor depended given away to another without interposing a word."

"Hold your recriminations, Master Dixon," replied the other; "the truth is, I thought I might make a good speculation there too; and perhaps I might yet, but that it would be long in bringing forth, and the present moment is pressing. What can be done?—Hark ye! —I bear the news of the council's determination to this St. Maur, or, as it may be, Lord Langleigh. Can we not burn the letters, and declare that he denies the name? We might even produce a letter to that effect! What say you?"

"That your scheme is as poor a one as ever a desperate man was driven to, who had no wit to form a better," answered the other. "But, nevertheless, you put me on the right track. Why should not this St. Maur die like other men?"

The merchant started; for, though probably as great a villain as the other, he was a villain in his own way, and had not stretched his contemplations beyond a little forgery. Walter Dixon remarked the look of alarm

with which his companion heard a proposition the deduction from which was evident enough; and again laying his hand upon his arm he said, "Manuel, my friend, this is too great a matter for thee—but get thee gone to thy bed—sleep sound, and feel sure that I will have the estates, and thou shalt have the gold. I am not advanced thus far, to be turned back by a phantom."

"But, Master Dixon—but, my good friend," cried the Jew, in some trepidation, "but—but—"

"What!" exclaimed the other, "art *thou* remorseful!—Was there ever yet a Jew who cared how the gold was come by, so that it flowed into his coffers? Why, Manuel, hast thou lost thy senses? Have you forgot what gold is? Sit you down and let us finish our Burgundy, and then get thee home and say no word to any one of what has passed—but smooth thy beard, and declare that Master Dixon is an honest gentleman, and wonderfully fertile of resources. The gold you shall have—never trouble your head how I come by it."

"It is not that, good Master Dixon; it is not that," replied the Jew. "Beyond all doubt the gold you get will all be won as becomes you—but how am I to tell that when once you have quitted Paris you will ever return?"

"Is that it? Fool! have I not told you that a hundred louis is my whole wealth?" demanded the other. "Am I a man to eke out a hundred louis to the last farthing in a foreign land? Am I a man to creep out my life a poor debtor living on the bounties of others? Am I a man to live upon coarse food, and drink plain water, and sigh in rags for bright eyes that will not look upon me?—Out, man! Think you that it is for your beggarly pounds that I propose to play a high stake with the certainty of winning in this world, and to take my chance of another. No, no, no! I have higher things in view than that. So get thee home to bed—and be at rest. Thy gold is all thou hast to heed; and thy gold thou shalt have."

Thus saying, Walter Dixon led the merchant to the

door of the room, and bade him adieu! "Yes, thy gold thou shalt have!" he added, as he turned into his own chamber again. "But whatever gold thou carriest with thee from Paris thou shalt bear no farther than Abbeville; for I hear that robbers are rife between that place and Calais, and it were a good jest in London to pay thee with thine own money. Here, Stillingham!" he continued, calling his servant, "seek me out by dawn of to-morrow, those two fellows Daintree and Wighton with whom I spoke three days ago, and bring them hither to breakfast."

The man bowed, and Walter Dixon began again to pace his chamber thoughtfully, but ever and anon he stopped by the table, replenished his glass, drank off the wine, and then renewed his walk.

CHAPTER XIX.

Again a change of scene! It was a small chamber, on the fourth story, in the Impasse de la Boule d'or at Paris, that, about half-past eleven o'clock, on the same evening of which we have just been speaking, contained a being, human in nature, but degraded below the brute, by the wild indulgence of all those passions which seem the fettering links that chain the intelligent soul to its companion of gross flesh. It was a sad and painful scene: the room had the dim, ill-lighted look of poverty; and there was the meager scantiness in all the furniture it contained—the bare and penurious catering for absolute necessities, and nothing more—which spoke the hired dwelling of wretchedness. A table of plain deal, marked and mottled with many a dull and sickly stain, stood in the midst; and three poor chairs—the shattered frame of one of which promised but little rest to the weary—stood round; while two beds, thrust into close alcoves, served apparently the pur-

poses of cupboards during the day, as well as fulfilled their more ostensible object at night, being now loaded with plates and dishes, swords, cloaks, and boots which were cast indiscriminately upon them after having been used, with little attention to cleanliness.

One of the chairs I have described was oppressed by the form of a tall powerful man, with strongly marked features, which had acquired, by many a painful and degrading scene, a look of anxious watchfulness, blended strangely with an affectation of easy swagger. Besides this, in every line might be seen the traces of low and deep debauchery, that most retributive of vices, which not only mulcts the heart of every good feeling, but brands upon the brow and cheek the burning contract which binds its victim its own for ever. The dress of this unhappy man had once been gay and rich; it was now soiled, and somewhat ragged; but it had withal that air of faded finery which brings into more painful and immediate contrast the present and the past, than any other shape assumed by that inevitable destiny of all earthly things, *decay*. On the table before him was a bottle, and, though he was alone, two glasses; and, if one might judge from his countenance, he had been drinking long, for there was upon it a degree of meditative absence of mind, a kind of unreasoning thoughtfulness (if one may use such seeming contradictions), which can only be obtained by a state of semi-inebriation. His eye had in it a sort of broad dull glare, as it fixed upon vacancy, which spoke the dull and misty state of mind where all objects are magnified, but none of them distinct; and while he remained, as he imagined, deeply buried in abstruse and curious thought, he every now and then instinctively raised the bottle, and seemed to pour something forth into the glass, though in truth the spirits it had once contained had been exhausted long before. Sometimes he would even raise the empty glass to his lips, and then set it down again, with an exclamation of surprise and anger; or else, with a murmur about the *brand wine* being very bad, as if he were making an excuse

to some one else, for something, he did not well know what.

At length, after he had sat some time alone, a heavy step sounded upon the stairs; and, starting up with the sort of nervous apprehension which drunkards entertain of being detected, he hastened to remove the vacant tenement of the departed spirit from the table, together with the goblet, murmuring to himself, "Who can it be? It cannot be Wighton yet! Curse the bottle!" and in his haste he let both bottle and glass fall and dash themselves to pieces on the floor.

Before he could apply any remedy, a loud knock at his chamber door demanded his attention; and seating himself once more firmly in his chair, and fixing his eyes with a speculative look upon airy nothing, he bade the visiter come in, with the tone of indifferent abstraction used among a particular class of cavaliers at that period.

The person who entered at his bidding was wrapped closely in his cloak; but the moment that was laid aside, the first occupant of the chamber roused himself with a look of extraordinary pleasure, exclaiming, "Ha, Master Stillingham, I am right glad to see thee. By the Lord I am, though, to say the truth,—to say the truth,—that last cup,—that last cup, sir, has made me rather hazy here," and he laid his finger on his brow. "I am not drunk; you understand me? No, d—n me, not drunk, only, you see, a little cloudy, like a dull morning, you know, Master Stillingham, which always turns out a fine day, you know. But what news of the worshipful general? How is Master Dixon, hey?"

"Come, come, Daintree," replied Walter Dixon's servant, for such was the visiter, "you must find a way to clear your scull of the strong waters. I come to you and Wighton from the general, about business which must be talked of seriously. So clear your brains, as you know how."

"That do I! that do I!" replied the other, "but prithee, Master Stillingham, prithee! pour thou the water, while I hold the head, for, good faith! my fingers

are slippery to-night, and I would rather neither break my scull nor the pitcher."

Stillingham, who seemed quite acquainted with the other's mode of proceeding, acceded at once; and while Daintree held his head over a basin, and threw back his collar to the shoulders, he poured a large pitcher of cold water over his head and neck with a sudden violence, which made the other sob like an infant. A moment or two after, however, he raised his dripping head, and wiping it with a napkin, which was none of the cleanest, declared himself quite sobered.

"Sit still awhile," replied Stillingham, "and we shall see, Master Daintree. Where is Captain Wighton? I thought to have found him here by this hour."

"No, no," replied the other, who, though by no means quite free from the effects of what he had drunk, had now, at all events, recovered a much greater command of his faculties. "No, no, he is at the Hotel de Ville, seeing what can be picked up among the Frondeurs. There is a great meeting there, and folks go masked. But what need of Wighton?" he added, with a toss of the head. "Wighton, I suppose, cannot serve you better than I can."

"Come, come; no jealousy, Master Daintree," replied the other. "Wighton cannot serve me without you, nor can you serve me without Wighton, though, of course, we have the greater trust in you. But though you shall be the man of action, I promise you, we must still have some one to keep watch and hold the horses. However, remember one thing. Whatever I say to you, when you come to speak with the general, seem as ignorant of the whole business as the dead, for you know well enough he chooses to settle all these affairs himself, and does not wish it to be thought that I know any thing about them."

"Oh, never fear, never fear! I know him of old," answered Daintree. "I'll not peach, if you take care that Wighton is not set over the head of a better man than himself, as he was in that business about—"

"Pshaw, man! never fear!" answered the servant,

"that was a business of nothing, in comparison with this; and here you shall be the man of action, while Wighton holds the horses, I tell you. So you may judge which is the most honourable. But hark!"

As he spoke, there was a quick footfall upon the stairs, as of some person taking three or four steps at once, and the next moment the door flew open, and in rushed a man, who will be best described by recalling to the reader's mind a certain respectable person who was found between Calais and Abbeville engaged with Daintree in lightening the pockets of a traveller of the only earthly load which was never yet found burthensome. On the present occasion he noticed no one in the room, but closing the door quickly after him, applied his ear to the key-hole, apparently to hear if any one followed on his track. All was silent in the chamber as in the house of death; but voices were heard shouting in the street, though the words of their vociferations could not be distinguished at that height. In a moment, however, they passed by, and Wighton, raising himself from his stooping position, cast his hat and cloak upon the bed, and welcomed General Dixon's servant as a dear friend.

"By Minos, judge of hell!" he exclaimed, in the tone of an ancient Pistol, "the rogues had nearly clutched me. I merely sought to carry a gentleman's hat for him, with a weighty diamond loop and button, when his villanous lackeys resented the very offer, before he had time to let go his hold of his hat. They had nearly killed me among them. One aimed a blow at me with a torch; another poked at me with a tuck, and another struck at me with a dagger; but, faith, I was invulnerable, and armed with heels which soon bade them defiance. But I am as thirsty as Tantalus. Hie thee, Daintree, and get us all a stoup of liquor from the Duke of Beaufort's head—What! thou wouldst say the money lacketh. There! there! there is a broad piece, which a good woman, a butcher's wife, paid for coming to see the show and crying God bless the good duke and the parliament!"

The prospect of drinking was not to be resisted by the worthy personage to whom this was addressed; and though he had a sort of jealous suspicion of both his companions that made him unwilling to leave them alone together, he contented himself with whispering to Stillingham not to tell Wighton too much, and then sallied forth in quest of the dearly beloved beverage.

The moment he was gone, however, Stillingham started up, and with a very different air from that which he had assumed towards the other, addressed the bully who remained alone with him.

"Hark ye, Wighton," he cried, "here is a good hit before us, if you will take a part. Give me all your ears, for I must have my tale over before that drunken fool returns."

"What now? what now? Master Stillingham," cried the other; "we are neither of us men to refuse a good hit, for on my honour we have been something very like starving for the last three days."

"Well, listen then! listen! and do not interrupt me," answered the other; "I have news for you—Dixon is ruined—I have overheard the whole story to-night as he talked with a Jew villain, called Manuel, you must have heard of in London. Lord Langleigh has come to life again, and the estates on which he, Dixon, has always counted are as far from him as ever."

"But who, in Satan's name, is Lord Langleigh?" demanded Wighton. "I never heard of him before."

"It matters not, it matters not," answered Stillingham, impatiently; "on the belief that he was dead, Dixon counted on large estates—spent his all—bound himself to usurers—and he proves to be living near Paris, and without he die within three days the estates are lost for ever. Even if he do, I am sure that they are lost still; but Dixon, who never despairs, is resolved to risk all. Now at this point I give him up, and if you like to help me, we shall have the pickings of all that is left. That is not much, to be sure, for a hundred louis is all the gold; but there are jewels, and rings, and buttons, worth five hundred more."

"But how, but how," demanded the other, beginning to rouse himself at such a prospect, "how is all this to be got."

"Why, listen," replied Stillingham. "I am sent to bid you and Daintree to breakfast with him to-morrow. You will be called upon to help in furnishing this Lord Langleigh with a passport for heaven. Let Daintree be the man of action, as I shall commend him to the general. He is good at the crossbow, you know, and though I am supposed to be profoundly ignorant of all, I can so place my words as to make them tell without seeming to know any thing. One will be chosen to keep watch, in whatever way they determine to attempt the little affair; and you must be he. You must then find some one hastily to convey a billet to Lord Langleigh, warning him of his danger, and signed with both our names to make pardon sure, if we be caught before we have completed our business. Wait upon the watch, however, till you see how the affair ends; for if Walter Dixon accomplishes his purpose in spite of our efforts, we must find other means to rid ourselves of him. Nay, nay, do not start! You know him but little, if you think that he and you could live many days upon the same earth after we have betrayed him."

"Hark, there is Daintree!" cried the other; "did you not hear a door below bang hard?"

They both listened, but no further sound made itself audible, and after a time the other proceeded. "No, no! you must wait whatever betide, till you can bring me sure tidings that Dixon is either seized or killed, for he may very likely make a sort of quarrel of it, and trust to his skill of fence. But, however, I would not for my life's worth move a jewel or a louis from its place till I knew that he was safely bestowed somehow."

"But suppose they seize me also," rejoined Wighton; "what comes of it then?"

"Nonsense," replied the other; "do not let them seize you! You will be upon the watch, and of

course, well prepared. And besides, if either you or I were seized, we are sure of getting clear, by sending the billet with the tidings. Pshaw! such a deed as that, in this day, clears a man of all the little sins that ever went before it. But, at all events, keep a good watch: the moment you can be sure that Dixon is either dead or taken, gallop off to me, and we clear the cabinet of all the trinkets that now encumber it. But hark, again! there is Daintree at last. Mind, on your life, to-morrow at your breakfast, seem to be as ignorant as a fortnight lamb of all that is to be talked about."

"I will, I will!" answered the other; "but before we set out, at eight of the clock meet me under the arcade of the Place Royale, and we may speak more. Now clear your countenance, for here comes our sot."

As he spoke, the step of Daintree was heard upon the stairs, with a sort of heavy yet unsettled sound, which seemed to give notice that his command over his limbs had not been at all increased by his visit to the cabaret, where probably he had added one or two draughts, on the strength of Wighton's broad piece, to those he had previously quaffed.

"The sot!" muttered his companion to himself, as he listened: "the sot! one cannot trust him with a crown for five minutes. Yet, on my honour, I can hardly take it on my conscience to leave him in the clutches of the law, to hang dangling like a great scarecrow on a tall gallows at the Gréve."

"Conscience!" echoed Stillingham, with a sneer; "what knave parson first taught you to think about conscience, Master Wighton? See you not that all things die and rot? and so will you, and so shall I; and what will conscience serve you in the earth? Make sure of this world, Master Wighton, for you cannot be sure of another."

"If there be no other world," answered Wighton, with a doubtful gaze upon vacancy—"if there be no other world, all I can say is, it is the strangest fancy man ever took in his head; and what put it there may

well be a marvel. I'll tell you what, Master Stillingham, it often strikes me, that we, who act as if there were no other world, shall be desperately ill off if there be. However, it is all too late to think about that now. I am too far in to go back, and so now, have on with you!"

With that sad and false conclusion, which the arch enemy so often furnishes to the sinner for the ultimate condemnation of his soul, Wighton rose to open the door for his companion, who had been making sundry vain efforts to hit the latch. No sooner was it thrown wide than he entered, bearing in a flagon of red wine, with an unsteady and limber step. He was now, however, in the state of wisdom incident to one stage of drunkenness, and convinced that he was as sober as a judge. He threw down the change he had brought with him before Wighton; and after asking Stillingham to drink, raised the tankard to his own lips, without remarking whether the other accepted or declined the invitation.

"How's this, Master Daintree?" cried Wighton, in a surly tone, when he had counted the silver. "How's this? four livres for a quart of Burgundy! What hast thou done with the rest of the change?"

"Done with the change, base Roundhead!" hiccoughed Daintree, setting down the flagon, his deep draught of the contents having carried him from the stage of wisdom to that of pugnacity. "Done with the change, base Roundhead! Darest thou, for thy pitiful life, say that I have filched thy change? There lies thy change, and here's the Burgundy," and he drank again; "and if thou sayest that I have done thee wrong, thou liest to thy beard and thy mustachios."

"I say you are a drunken sot, and would steal the king's crown for liquor," replied his companion, nothing daunted by the grasp the other laid upon his sword. The word drunken, however, was all that reached the ears of Daintree, who was every moment feeling more deeply the potent effects of his manifold draughts. "Drunk!" he shouted. "Drunk! Cullion! thou

liest! Have at thee, ho!" and drawing his tuck, he made a vague lunge at his companion, who put it by with ease, and with a slight push laid him prostrate on the floor. Many a sprawling effort to rise the fallen ruffian made, and many a half-intelligible phrase he uttered, till at length, in one of the intervals, sleep and drunkenness overpowered him quite, and deep snorings took the place of all.

Wighton, raising him from the floor in his nervous arms, cast him upon one of the beds, a dead insensible weight; and after looking at him for a moment with a glance of mingled anger and contempt, he said, "It's as well for such a thing to die as live—give him a flagon of strong waters half an hour before, and he'll know nothing of the hanging." And true to the vanity of human nature, he sat down with Stillingham to lay out some of the basest schemes that ever two villains designed, thinking himself as superior a being to the drunkard on the bed as the lion to the sow.

"Think you he will be sober enough to do his part to-morrow?" demanded Stillingham. "I knew him long before I met with you here, Master Wighton, and ever saw he was a drunken hound; but I never beheld him so besotted till to-night."

"Never fear him! never fear him!" answered Wighton. "He is seldom better when he lays down to sleep—that is, if he have money to buy either wine or aquavitæ. But pledge me, Master Stillingham, and then let us settle all to-night, and have nothing before us but action to-morrow."

What wine Daintree had left in the tankard was soon discussed by the other two, and they proceeded to fill up all the minute particulars of the plan, the sketch of which Stillingham had before given to his companion. They then separated for the night, and the servant, returning home, prepared to act the unconscious and ignorant domestic towards his wily and daring master, who, with all his cunning and decision, was outwitted and betrayed by the low quiet art of the despicable insect that thus lay like an asp in the lair of the tiger.

CHAPTER XX.

HAPPINESS is the best of all panaceas, and no nostrum that ever was vended—even granting full faith to the description of the very charlatan who sells it—possesses half the curative effects of happiness. Yet, unfortunately, it is so rare in this globe—the plant that bears it is so seldom found, and the quantity produced so small—that it is not often met with at all; and still more seldom, if ever, is it to be procured unadulterated. Oh, how many wounds might be healed! how many diseases of the heart and the brain which baffle the leech's art might be cured with ease, if that thin fine essence could be obtained in time! It may be thought I speak figuratively, and would allude to diseases of the mind; but, good faith, I speak of the body also, and mean that many an ailment, and many an injury of our corporeal frame, would yield readily to happiness, when no other remedy would affect them. Had Adam continued in the garden of Eden, where all was happiness, how long would he have lived? Beyond doubt, to all eternity! but curiosity, that serpent, stung him. Though happiness was within his grasp, he chose the fruit of another tree to heal his wound, lost paradise, and died.

The effect of happiness on the wounded and weakened frame of Henry Masterton was almost miraculous, and resting in the same dwelling with his Emily, he nearly forgot that he had been ill. The night passed in sweet, sweet repose; not that death-like sleep that steeps the whole soul in forgetfulness, but that gentle light slumber which leaves the happy heart awake to fill the void of night with glorious dreams—that sleep which does not smother all our sensations as if a heavy mountain was piled upon our breast, but that soft elastic

repose which lies upon the bosom like an eiderdown quilt, warm, soft, and lighter than a summer cloud.

From such slumber he awoke again to happiness and to the society of all that was dear to him. It is true that as he stood and dressed himself, the memory of his brother's recent fate came in to sadden and to chasten his brighter thoughts. But when he reflected, and knew that had that brother chosen the path of virtue and of honour, joy such as he then felt might have been his fate also,—though the reflection was not without its bitter, still there was the silent, involuntary, unconscious comparison between the results of good and evil; while, influencing, unseen, every feeling and every thought, he had the satisfaction too in his heart of having taken the better part, and in the review of his own fate, and that of the gone, there was a support and a consolation, and a promise and a reward. He did not triumph—no, not for a moment. Such was not the feeling that animated his bosom, but he felt that he had himself been happy in virtue, and that circumstances, in spite of all their first aspect, had worked out virtue's recompense; but he felt also, that even had they continued adverse, he would still have had an internal strength which they could not affect. While such were his reflections on himself, and on his own conduct, it was but natural that his mind should turn to that of the other persons who, playing a part in the same scene as himself, had played it ill; and he saw that even while bitter remorse and painful self-upbraidings must have mingled with every moment of their enjoyment, sorrow had followed vice, and the end of all had been evil. As he thought thus, his mind rested for a moment upon Walter Dixon, and he could not but ask himself, "Will that man yet escape? and what will be his fate?"

Even while he was thus thinking, his page, little Ball-o'-fire, ran into the room, with his dark eyes blazing. "Where have you been, boy?" asked his master; "it is late, and I have needed you."

"I have been watching a hawk hovering over a dovecot," replied the boy.

"You think more than you say, boy," replied his master, catching a look of deeper meaning in his face. "Speak out—I command you!"

"Well, then," answered the page, "I have been watching Walter Dixon prying about, and asking questions at all the cottages near the gate. If he comes for good, he must be good indeed, for he rises betimes to do it."

Till that moment it had never struck Henry Masterton how keen would be the disappointment of the bad man of whom he had been thinking, on discovering that the estates which he had aimed at so long, so perseveringly, and so daringly were offered to another. But now that it did strike him, he felt instantly convinced that Walter Dixon would not tamely stand and see them in the power of any one to refuse or accept. What means he might take it was impossible to tell; but that the means he did take would be bold, villanous, and remorseless, none that knew the man could doubt. Henry had already seen blood spilt by his hand, and his suspicions of the motive which led him to spill that blood were too strong not to point his fears towards a similar attempt against Lord Langleigh. He had seen, too, exposed openly by himself, the artful and insidious manner in which he had pursued his plan from step to step, and still, when baffled in one attempt of knavery, had betaken himself to some scheme still blacker than the former. He could not yet know, however, Henry thought, the offer that had been made to Lord Langleigh, and therefore whatever were his motives for being in the neighbourhood of St. Maur so early, they could hardly originate in such a source. The active suspicions of little Ball-o'-fire, however, he did not choose to check, and therefore before he left him he bade him, with a smile, "keep a good watch upon the enemy."

"I will, I will!" replied the boy, and Henry Masterton felt more confidence in his energetic intelligence than he would have done in twenty sentries at the park gates

It is wellnigh impossible to describe the passing of happy days. Life is always like a stream, whatever character it may assume. Grief murmurs, anger roars, impatience frets; but happiness, like a calm river, flows on in quiet sunlight, without an eddy or a fall to mark the rushing on of time towards eternity. Henry and Emily met in happiness, and for more than one hour they were left to enjoy that happiness alone.

Lord Langleigh and Lady Margaret joined them at the morning meal, and that too passed in pleasant ease. There was much to be told, and much to be spoken of; and Emily's father then informed them that he had that morning despatched a packet to London, to reject the restoration of his estates while offered as a boon by the council of state. He had still, however, he said, claimed them as a right, and so had left the question for future years.

Little passed besides that is not already recorded in these pages, except the history which Lord Langleigh gave of his life, which he did while, at his own proposal, they walked forth into the grounds around the house. The midday sun had gained a greater warmth than it had possessed on the day before, the cold wind was lulled to sleep, and the hoar-frost, which in the morning had whitened all the grass, was now melting into diamonds round the green blades whereon it hung. Lord Langleigh rendered the tale as short as possible, and here perhaps it is abridged still more.

"To you, Henry," he said, "my story is to be told; for Emily already knows it, and I think you yourself have heard as far as my escape from prison. How that escape was contrived, matters not; I trust in God that the bolts of the Tower of London may never be drawn upon you. In my case they were opened by a friend—poor Swainson, the captain of the guard—the very night previous to the morning appointed for my execution. I confess that the whole business took me by surprise, and it seemed as if I woke from a dream, when I found myself in a boat putting off from Sheerness for a Dutch brig that lay out a little distance from

the land. How much more surprised was I to find that the whole had been contrived for some weeks, and that that angelic being whose portrait you saw in my library had died under the united exertions she made to procure my pardon, and to ensure my escape if that pardon was refused. She had been the main mover of all. She had hired the vessel to carry me away. She had bribed more than one of the meaner agents, and she had sold jewels and plate, and every thing she could collect, to give us at least a competence on a foreign shore. Her last act was to vest the whole money she had collected in diamonds; but she lived not to see the success of her plans. She died even before she could communicate them to me; and it was a former protégé of my own, and one who had been her chief instrument, that after embarking with me at Sheerness, put a small purse into my hands, containing the value of thirty thousand pounds in precious stones.

"The anchor was weighed the moment I was on board, and going below, I found that the only passenger besides myself and the person who conducted me thither was a young English lad of the name of Ireton, who would fain see foreign lands. He was a keen enthusiastic boy, full of strange notions and Utopian schemes of perfect republics, and things that the world can never see.

"At length, after beating about during the whole morning, I went to bed, for I was weary and exhausted; and how long I slept I do not know, but I awoke to find all in confusion and dismay. I will not try to tell the horrors of a shipwreck: the ship had struck—all was darkness and tempest around us—the rain was pouring in torrents—the waves were dashing over us every moment, and the wind was roaring as if with demon pleasure at our distressed state. The ship had heeled-to till her yards dipped in the water, and the deck was half-covered. The Dutchmen were resolved to be drowned quietly, and my poor deliverer, Captain Swainson, just as I was coming upon deck, jumped overboard, though hurt by the fall of the mast, and tried to swim

for some lights we saw upon the shore at the distance of perhaps a mile. He reached the land, I find, but died from his bruises on the beach. Ireton was bit with the same madness, and though he could not swim a stroke, would have plunged over too; but I prevented him, and tied him to a spar, while he did the same good office for myself. I could swim well, and am not wont to lose my coolness, especially in cold water; the pilot's office, therefore, fell to me, and holding tight by the poor boy, who, to do him justice, was as firm as a rock, I steered for the land. We were disappointed, however, in our first efforts, for right before us lay a reef over which the surf was beating furiously. Had we attempted that, death would have been our certain portion, and it required all my strength and skill to keep us clear. Nevertheless, buoyed up by the spars to which we were tied, keeping a good heart, and using no efforts but those that might guide but not exhaust us, we got along the shore to a small calm bay, under some high rocks, on the coast of Kent. I had nothing with me but my small purse of jewels, and a little horn bottle of strong waters that served us in good stead, for we were dying of cold.

"When day broke, however, we found that we had partly swam and had partly been drifted near three miles from the ship, which now lay a complete wreck upon the sands. Day, however, was a more pleasing sight to Ireton than it was to me, for he had lived long in Kent, and had an aunt dwelling within a few miles of the spot where we then stood. He knew or guessed my situation, however, and in return for my having saved his life, he plighted his existence upon the security of mine. At his aunt's I lay secreted for ten days, till all pursuit was over, and the government were convinced that I had perished. As a vessel could not there be procured, I at length bade adieu to my kind hostess and her nephew, to whom I promised an account of my future fate; and then walking across the country in the disguise of a pedlar, presented myself at the gate of my good cousins, Lady Margaret and

Sir Thomas Langleigh. They were then in the height of prosperity, and even of court favour; but when once I had made my way to speech of them, which was not easy, they received me with open arms, and provided for my farther escape. I thought at that time of claiming my dear Emily from your father, Henry, as soon as I should be established in France; but I was dissuaded by my cousin Margaret, who pointed out to me that, in the rambling and uncertain life I might probably lead, she could not be so well provided for as under the care of the Lord Masterton."

"In truth, my good cousin," said Lady Margaret, "I had one motive which I did not tell you—I feared that you might take to your bosom another wife, in which case our poor Emily might have suffered some hardships."

"You did me wrong," replied Lord Langleigh; "but, however, I thought your judgment best, and the more so when I reflected that my noble friend had promised to unite her to his eldest son. My own feelings bade me reclaim her, but the better considerations of my child's future fate and happiness made me decide upon leaving her in hands that I knew would do her justice. The desire of having her with me was the only inducement I could have had to suffer my escape from my doom to transpire; and when that was removed by my determination to leave her behind, I further resolved to confine my secret to the bosoms with which it already rested. I proposed, indeed, Henry, to intrust it also to your father, and I made two attempts to see him with the purpose of doing so; but the austerity of his retirement, and the somewhat proud reserve in which he lived, frustrated my endeavours to communicate with him personally, and I dared not trust the whole details of my secret in writing. Even to Lady Margaret I wrote under my assumed name, and lucky it proved that I did so, for more than one of my letters miscarried. Thus passed the years: Lord Masterton guarded and protected my Emily, and Lady Margaret watched over her continually; while, on a foreign shore,

I dropped the name which had been branded with the charge of treason, and assuming that of the property I bought, passed my time as best I might. To one person more I was obliged to disclose my secret—the Cardinal de Richelieu, whose eyes fell upon me with keen suspicion the moment I entered France; but I told him my whole tale, and produced proofs that he could not doubt. Once satisfied, he was kind and liberal, gave me by letters-patent a title to the name I had assumed, and opened the way for me in the French army. I will not fight all my battles over again; suffice it that I did as well as the rest, and rose to the rank I now bear. Every day, however, though I continually longed to see my child, I was more and more convinced that the advice of Lady Margaret was wise; and though I twice ventured over to England and contrived to get a sight of my Emily in her early youth, I refrained though with pain from claiming her. I had one consolation, however, in my solitude. My excellent cousin here, Lady Margaret, when all the effects of the Lord Langleigh were sold off as the property of a traitor, bought that picture which you saw in my library, and afterward sent it to me, to whom it was most valuable. With it before my eyes, how often have I fancied that I could hold communion with the dead! But to leave that subject; my last visit to England was when I accompanied Sir Andrew Fleming, and on that occasion, as I remained there some months, I had nearly fallen into the hands of the parliamentarians more than once.

"I should have cared little about it on my own account, if such an event had taken place, but, beyond doubt, it would have cost poor Fleming his life. The greatest cause of uneasiness which I met with was the conduct of your brother. Sir Andrew Fleming hovered round his bad wife with a strange mixture of jealousy, and hatred, and love; and even to catch a casual sight of her as she passed was excitement enough almost to drive him out of his senses for the day. When your regiment of cavalry was quartered at Penford-

bourne, we drew nearer, but some one conveyed a letter to Sir Andrew Fleming, which told him tales that I shall not repeat."

Lord Langleigh glanced his eye towards Emily, to intimate that her presence did not permit his noticing more fully the contents of the letter, and then proceeded: —"The result was a meeting between Sir Andrew Fleming and your brother, which was interrupted by your arrival with some horsemen. Your brother behaved gallantly, and as he and Sir Andrew were nearly equal in the use of their weapon, how the affair would have terminated had you not come up, Heaven only knows. Sir Andrew was severely wounded, as well as your brother, and he quitted England soon after. I was uneasy and unhappy concerning the fate of my dear Emily, and I wandered for some time in the neighbourhood of Masterton House. But at length I found that your brother had returned, that he was living a regular and apparently happy life in his own family, and I began to believe that he had been calumniated. However I wrote to Lady Margaret, bidding her watch carefully over my Emily, and, if she found that the marriage proposed was likely to be unhappy, in my name to oppose it, and reveal all to Lord Masterton. But the civil war had deranged all communications, and my letter never reached its destination. Lady Margaret, on her part, wrote twice to me from Masterton House, telling me that she saw clearly the proposed marriage would render all engaged in it miserable, and beseeching me to authorize her to put a stop to it. But I was still absent from Paris, and I received at once on my return to my own dwelling those two epistles, and a third, which gave me the intelligence that my child was safe in France, after the many dangers and horrors she had gone through. All that has happened since you already know; and—I have only further to show you my green-house, in which I have contrived to baffle winter and all his frosts, and keep sweet flowers while the snow is on the ground."

Henry smiled at the sudden transition, and was

going to ask some farther questions, when a little girl came running along one of the walks, and, approaching Lord Langleigh with a familiarity that showed the known urbanity of his nature, told him that her mother was very ill that morning, and that the kind good gentleman said she had better send for monsieur immediately.

"What kind good gentleman do you mean, little Adele?" replied Lord Langleigh, patting her white curly head.

"Oh, a good gentleman who has been two or three times in the cottage to-day, and was asking both my father and mother a great many questions," answered the child.

"My poor gardener's wife is dying, I am afraid," said Lord Langleigh in English. "You, Henry, continue your walk with Emily and Lady Margaret, and I will rejoin you in a moment; I am both master and physician here, so I must needs go and see my patient."

"A letter, sir," said one of the servants coming up suddenly from the house: "old André du Chesne, from the hamlet, brought it, saying that it was to be delivered immediately."

Lord Langleigh turned the letter to break the seal, bidding the child go home and tell her mother he would be at their cottage immediately; but before the wax had given way under his hand he asked the attendant, "Is the old man waiting for an answer?"

"No, sir; he merely left the letter and went away," replied the other.

"Then put it on the table in my library," he said, giving it to the man; "I will come back and read it directly. It is odd enough," he continued, speaking to Lord Masterton in English, "that letter is addressed to me as Lord Langleigh: but humanity must not give way to curiosity; so I will go to this poor woman, and on my return we will see who has so soon found out what has lately taken place."

Thus saying, he turned and left them, and Henry walked on beside Emily. Scarcely had Lord Master-

ton taken ten steps, however, when a sort of misgiving came over the young Cavalier's heart. He could not well tell why he feared, or what it was he apprehended. It was more an impression that there was some danger near, than any clear conviction of the probability of any real peril; one of those vague undefined feelings of approaching evil that every one has experienced more or less in his passage through life, which are forgotten when they pass over unfulfilled by any after-event, but which are treasured up carefully by superstition whenever they are casually dignified by succeeding circumstances. There was something, he could not help thinking, strange about the letter addressed to Lord Langleigh, when the existence of such a person had only been known to three people for a space of eighteen years before. He remembered also what little Ball-o'-fire had told him in the morning; and, though he could not believe that Walter Dixon could yet have received intelligence of the failure of his schemes, he blamed himself for not having communicated to Lord Langleigh the suspicion he entertained.

Such were the thoughts and feelings that crossed his mind soon after Lord Langleigh had left them; and on looking round he perceived that some grooms were near at the moment leading their horses from the water towards the house, which was not far distant, so that Emily and Lady Margaret were in safety. Henry determined therefore to follow Lord Langleigh, even at the risk of incurring a charge of idle apprehension.

"There is something which I forgot to say to your father, beloved," he said, turning to Emily somewhat abruptly; "and as I ought to have told him before, my Emily will forgive my leaving her. Go on to the house, dear girl, and I will be back with you in an instant."

Emily looked surprised; but Lady Margaret, who had remarked more keenly the changes of Lord Masterton's countenance, saw that something was wrong, and, without question, at once replied that they would wait him in the library.

Henry instantly hurried after Lord Langleigh, but the other walked fast and was a good way through the wood before the young Cavalier even came in sight of him. He did so, however, at the turn of a long alley, which led direct to the little cottage of the gardener. The alley itself was clear and open, and the trees on each side were not very thick, but there was a good deal of low cut beech about, on which, though the season was winter, the brown leaves still hung as thick as the green ones in summer.

About half-way down the walk, that is to say, at the distance of about a hundred and fifty yards, was to be seen the figure of Lord Langleigh alone, for the little girl had run on before him to the cottage; and Henry Masterton took two or three steps onward before he perceived that there was any other person near. Whether it was some sound called his attention, or mere accident directed his eyes that way, he knew not, but his glance, a moment after he had entered that avenue, turned towards the trees at the left-hand side where the brushwood was thickest; and there, about half-way again between him and Lord Langleigh, he beheld the figures of two men advanced a little beyond the copse, but not beyond the tall trees that bordered the walk. One stood a step behind the other, while the first, leaning against one of the larger beech-trees, seemed taking a cool and deliberate aim with a steel crossbow, which he held in his hand, at the figure of the nobleman, whose back was turned towards him.

The agony of the young Cavalier at that moment is hardly to be described. He was too far off to render the least assistance; and as the wind set towards him, the very sound of his voice might not reach the ears of the assassins in time to stay them. He paused not to think, however, but springing forward like lightning, he shouted Lord Langleigh's name with his whole power.

The sound just reached them and made the murderers start. "Fool! fool!" cried the man behind, "fire at all events, we shall be over the wall before he can reach us;" and seizing the crossbow from the hands of

the other, he raised it to his own shoulder. But at that moment there was a rustle in the opposite wood like a deer starting through a brake; and in an instant afterward, with one bound, little Ball-o'-fire cleared the bushes and the alley, and sprang at the throat of him with the crossbow, like a famished wolf. Henry saw the boy grasp his collar with one hand and raise the other high; and the next moment they both went down and rolled on the ground together.

The noise and the shouting had caused Lord Langleigh himself to turn; and Henry was by this time within twenty yards of the spot. One of the assassins was still rolling with the boy on the earth, and the other, seeing himself detected, sprang away through the copsewood. Henry followed like lightning, and a few hundred yards brought them both to the park wall. A ladder was placed against it, and the fugitive had nearly reached the top, when Lord Masterton, with a great exertion, sprang up, caught him by the arm, and hurled him down backward to the ground. Henry drew his sword, and setting his foot upon his breast, gazed upon his face, from which a mask that had before covered it had been dashed in his fall; but the countenance, though not exactly that of a stranger, was not familiar to him.

"Who are you?" cried Henry. "Villain, who are you?" But the man replied nothing, and struggled to rise, so that a more deadly contest might have taken place between them, had not the sound of voices coming through the wood in search of them shown the assassin that the struggle could not be long.

"I will yield, I will yield," he cried, at length; "do your best to get me a pardon, and I will tell all."

As he spoke the figure of the little page appeared through the trees, followed by Lord Langleigh and the gardener. The boy was absolutely drenched and dripping with blood; but the lightness of his movements showed that it was none of his own. With this assistance the prisoner was immediately disarmed and bound, to which he offered no resistance, only repeating from

time to time, "Do your best to get me a pardon, and I will tell all."

"Nobody wants you to tell any thing," cried the boy; "we know it all already. But here is a ladder, there must be some one outside," and springing up, he was at the top of the wall in a moment. In the high road which, we have seen, flanked one side of the park, were standing three horses, two of which were held by a man who was mounted on the third. From time to time he cast his eye towards the part of the wall over which his companions had prepared their escape. The moment he saw the face of little Ball-o'-fire, however, —which was, in sooth, frightful enough to behold—he set spurs to his beast, and still holding the other two, galloped off towards Paris at full speed.

"Fly, fly to the house!" cried the page; "send out horses after him, and we shall have them all."

"You will not catch him," murmured the man they had taken; "and if you did, what good would it do you, any more than keeping me? The man that set us on lies dead in the walk, if that young tiger's steel went as deep as it seemed to me to do."

"That did it! that did it!" replied the boy; "it went into his heart, ay, and through it—I have paid him the blow he struck me—and he will never strike another."

"Then was it Walter Dixon himself?" said Lord Masterton, "and have you slain him outright, boy?"

"It is certainly the man who proved himself in England so inveterate an enemy of my poor friend Fleming," replied Lord Langleigh, "and he is as dead as the parting of body and soul can make him. But what could be his design in endeavouring to shoot me with a crossbow, as your boy tells me he attempted, I am yet to learn. I never gave the scoundrel any offence but in being the friend of Sir Andrew Fleming."

"Do your best to get my pardon, and I will tell you all about it," murmured the prisoner.

"I will make no conditions, sir," answered Lord Langleigh; "speak, and if it appears you are less

guilty than you seem, you may escape, but that is your only chance."

"Well, then," said the other, "I may as well tell all I know. Yon General Walter Dixon heard last night, as he told me this morning, and that by a certain hand, that the parliament or the council, I do not well know which, had given his estates to this Lord Langleigh, and he offered me and another English Cavalier I won't name forty louis each, if we would join him in a little bit of sharp work here, which, as he said, was no every-day matter certainly, but would be over in five minutes. Well, what would you have us do? Here we are in Paris starving—three days out of four not a morsel of meat enters our mouths, and the fourth day's meal we get on charity.—Driven out of our native country by the cuckoldy Roundheads, without a sixpence in the world—"

But Henry Masterton cut short the exculpation, or rather the excuses which the ruffian was making, for carrying perhaps to a more dreadful extent in France the same crimes with which he had probably been conversant in England.

"Let us hear this man's tale, my lord, another time," he said; "I have seen this goodly gentleman before, engaged in a little affair not very dissimilar to that in which we have now caught him. He is an unhappy wretch, I believe, and as I know his connexion with Walter Dixon, I can well conceive that he has been a tool in the hands of that artful fiend. He has told all that he knows, as far as it immediately concerns us, already; and I can tell you a great deal more myself. Indeed it was for that purpose I left Lady Margaret and Emily somewhat abruptly, and I fear they may be alarmed by this time at our absence."

Lord Langleigh at once acceded to Henry's wish to return; and pinioned strongly, the prisoner was brought after them by the gardener. The whole of the young Cavalier's knowledge of Walter Dixon was told as they proceeded towards the house; and the causes which led him to fear some attempt upon the life of Lord Lang-

leigh, as soon as the other became aware that his schemes were baffled, were easily explained.

"Ending as it has done," said Lord Langleigh, with a smile, "I am not sorry, my dear boy, that you did not tell me your apprehensions till they were justified by the event; for I own I should have been fool enough to have laughed at them, and perhaps might have lost my life for my pains. There lies the carrion of that base villain; and, on my faith, I must think of some reward for this bold boy, who has played his part better than many a man would have done it."

"I would have done better still," replied the boy, "and stabbed him before the string was drawn, if I had not run to call my lord as soon as I saw them creeping through the bushes; but before I could reach him, I caught a sight of his cloak coming down the alley, and ran on to be there in time."

Henry Masterton paused a moment to gaze upon the contorted form of Walter Dixon, as it lay upon the path, with the crossbow and bullet fallen at a little distance, and the whole frosty ground round about deluged with blood. The hands were still clenched and the arms extended, as when the boy had freed himself from their convulsive grasp, and the features, though calmed by the all-quieting hand of death, still bore evident traces of the fierce and deadly passions which had been the habitual tenants of his bosom.

"So, this is the end of all thy villanies and all thy boasted cunning!" said the young Cavalier, as he gazed upon him. "To die by the hand of a boy, in the last despairing effort of thy wickedness!"

But little more was discovered of the transactions of that day. It appeared that Walter Dixon had been more than once at the cottage of the gardener during the morning; and after having informed himself of all the general habits of Lord Langleigh, had sent the child down to desire his presence, without the knowledge of the woman herself, who was, in fact, much better than she had been the day before. On further questioning their prisoner, it was discovered that the

name of the man who had borne the news of Lord Langleigh's restoration to his estates had been mentioned by Dixon, and that it was Manuel; and on consequent inquiry in Paris, such was found to be the appellation of a well-known Jewish agent who had left the French capital suddenly the morning after the death of Walter Dixon became public news. It may be mentioned here also, that the same Manuel became bankrupt in London within one month afterward, and by the infamous knavery of his dealings brought ruin and desolation to the hearths of many a happy and an honest family. Two other persons also, it was discovered, had quitted Paris about the same time, after having plundered the lodgings which Dixon had occupied of every portable article of value that they contained. The one was his servant Stillingham; the other, it is supposed, was Wighton, as those two worthies became notorious swindlers in London; and about a year and a half after graced the gallows at Tyburn for robbing and maltreating the secretary of General Harrison.

As to Master Daintree, the companion of Walter Dixon, who had been taken by Henry Masterton, a degree of mystery attaches to his fate, which I am not adequate to solve. He was confined in a chamber of Lord Langleigh's house, that was deemed secure, but the next morning it was discovered that, without the slightest appearance of effort or violence in any part of the doors or windows, he had made his escape. Little Ball-o'-fire was the last person seen near those apartments, and he was afterward heard to say that it would have been a pity if the fellow had been hanged, for that, though he had at last consorted with a Roundhead, for the sake of a few broad pieces, he was a true Cavalier at heart. This caused some suspicion among the servants, but as neither Lord Langleigh nor Lord Masterton seemed to entertain any, the matter dropped and was forgotten.

I have now very nearly arrived at the end of my story without being aware of it; and, in truth, I do not

very well know what more is to be told. My lord, who is now sitting in his easy-chair on the opposite side of the fire, forbids my saying any thing of his campaign upon the Rhine, and the countess begs me, in pity to all parties, not to give an account of the wedding, which took place about three months after the events I have lately been describing. Upon these subjects, therefore, I must not employ my pen; and it is scarcely necessary to tell any of my countrymen that the estates both of Lord Langleigh and Lord Masterton were left unappropriated by the parliamentary commissioners, till the restoration of King Charles the Second gave them back to their right owners. It is now nearly five-and-twenty years since that restoration took place, and almost ten since the good Lord Langleigh went to join in heaven a wife he had never ceased to love on earth. His cousin Lady Margaret died some years before; and, having said thus much, I believe I have mentioned all the persons connected with this history, except him whom we have distinguished by the name of little Ball-o'-fire; but, as his after-fate is treated of in another book, it is not for me to speak of it here. However, if any person whatsoever, moved by laudable curiosity, should desire further explanations or information regarding any person or circumstance hereinbefore mentioned, they have only to apply to me, John Woolsanger, M.A., at the rectory of Masterton parish, not far from Newton Bushel, in Devonshire, when I will satisfy them to their heart's content; all the documents, papers, procès verbaux, notes, memorandums, and letters having been intrusted for that purpose to my charge, by my good and excellent lord and patron Henry Lord Masterton, of Masterton House, and, since the Restoration, Earl of Kinlivingstone in Ireland.

THE END.